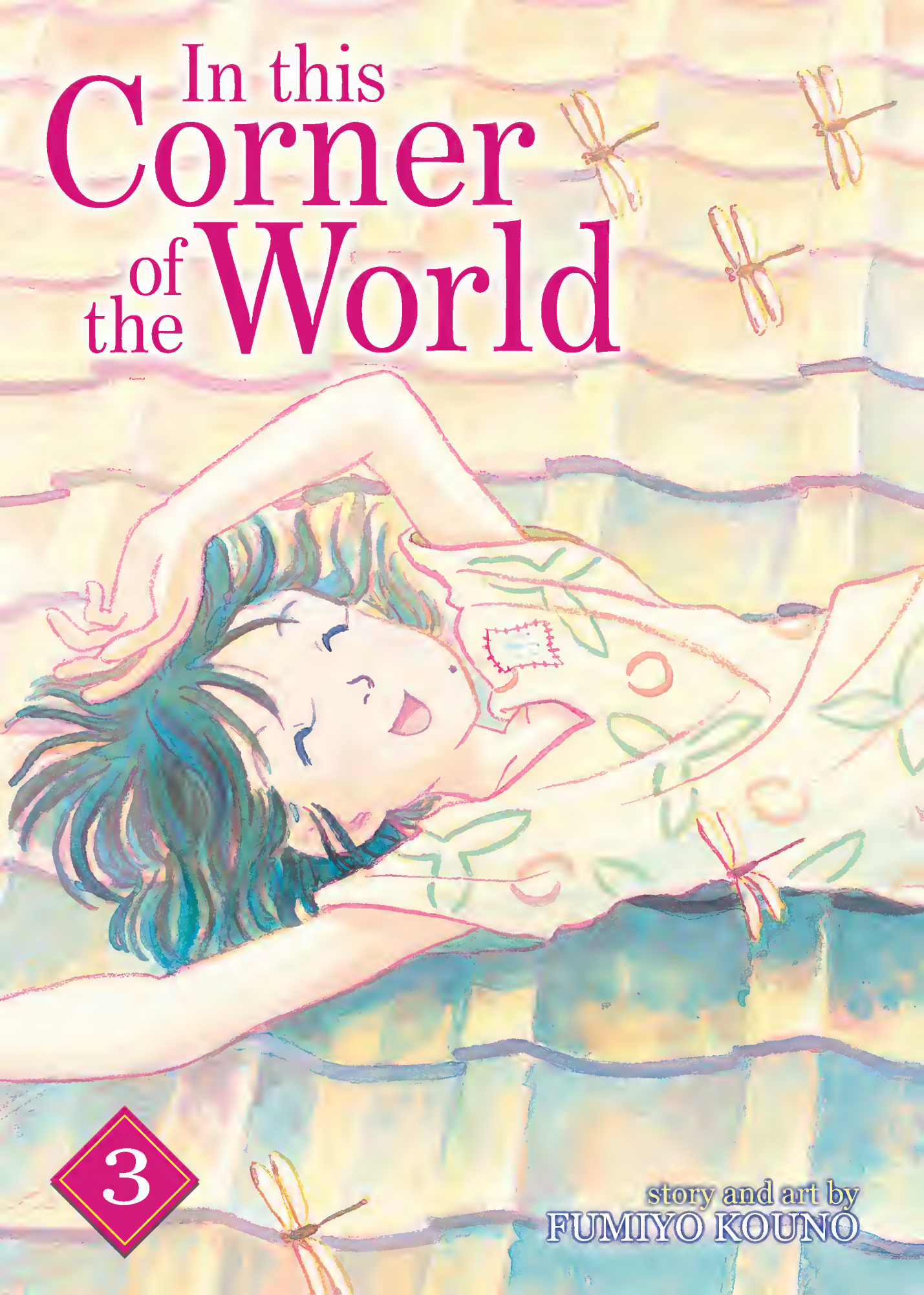
In this Corner of the World



3

story and art by
FUMIYO KOUNO

In this Corner of the World 3

story and art by FUMIYO KOUNO

Translation by Adrienne Beck

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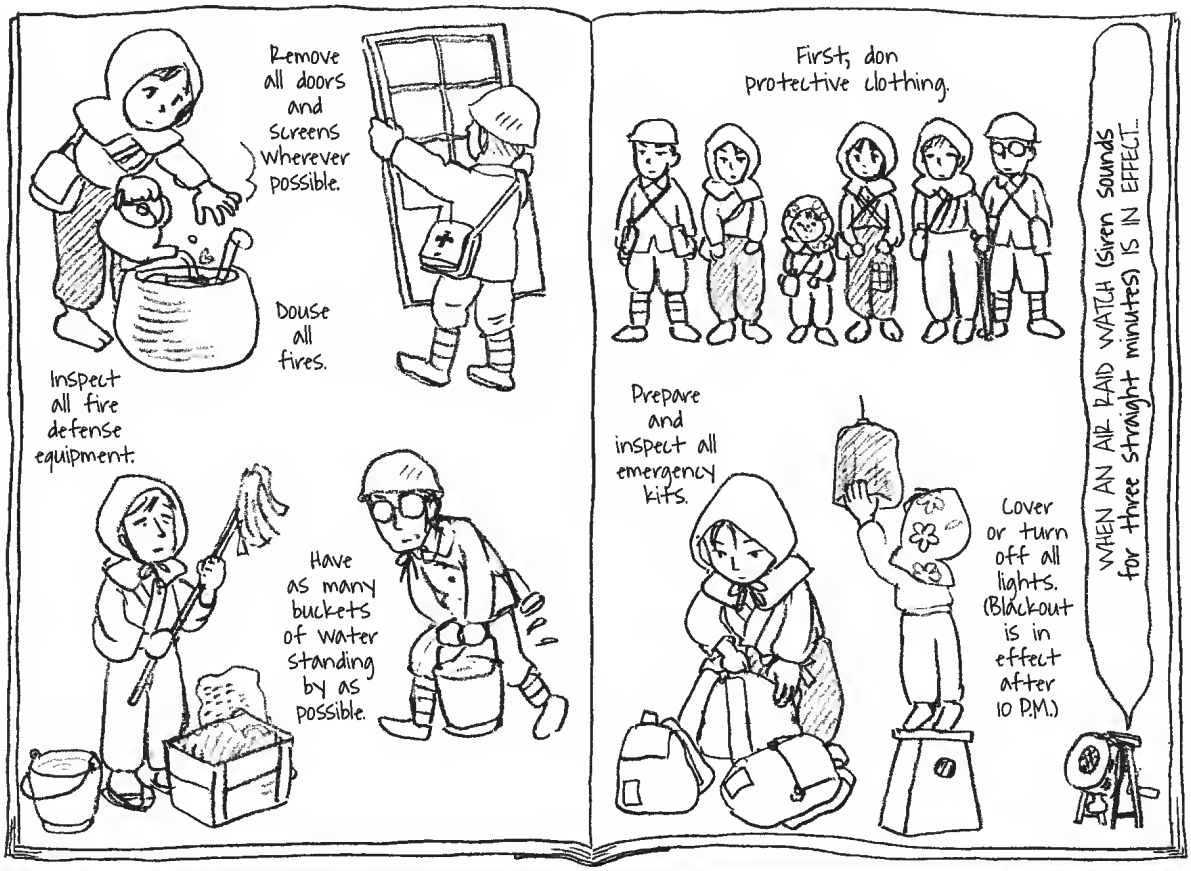
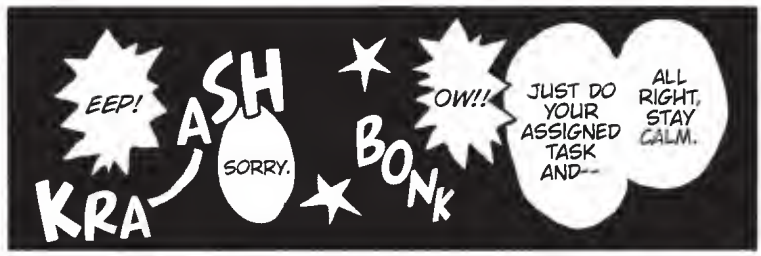
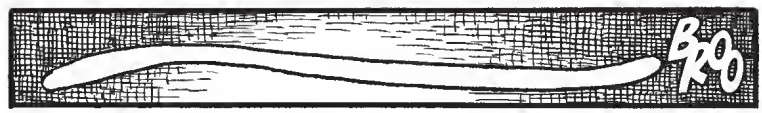
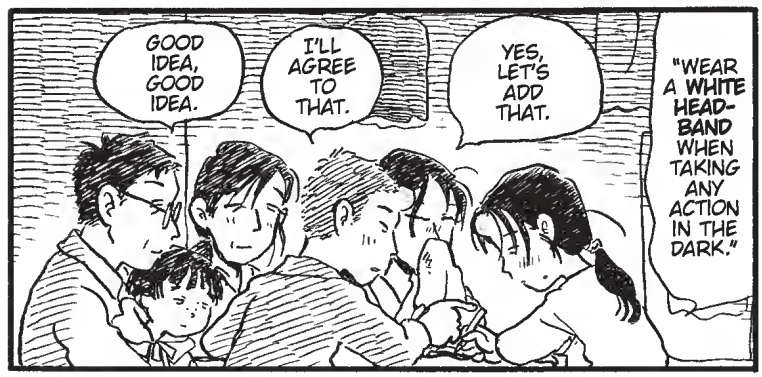






CHAPTER 29
(April, 1945)



AIR RAID WARNING LIFTED (Siren sounds for three minutes straight)

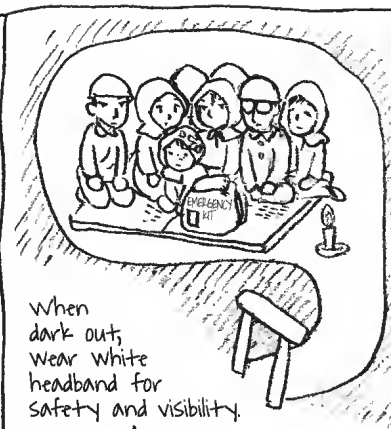
Spread no gossip that may disturb or alarm others, even if it was something you yourself witnessed!

Should an EXPLOSIVE fall, don't intervene. Take shelter!

INFORM NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION HEAD → INFORMS VOLUNTEER GUARDS

If you can't reach shelter, lie flat on the ground.

Practice tossing water from buckets until capable of sending it at least 4 to 5 meters away.



When dark out, wear white headband for safety and visibility.

Unlock all doors and gates, then evacuate to the air raid shelter.

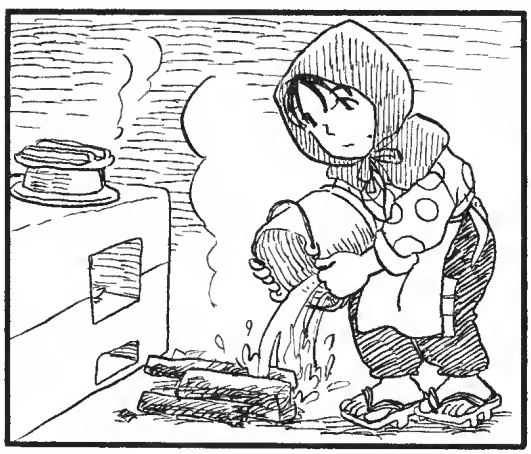
AIR RAID

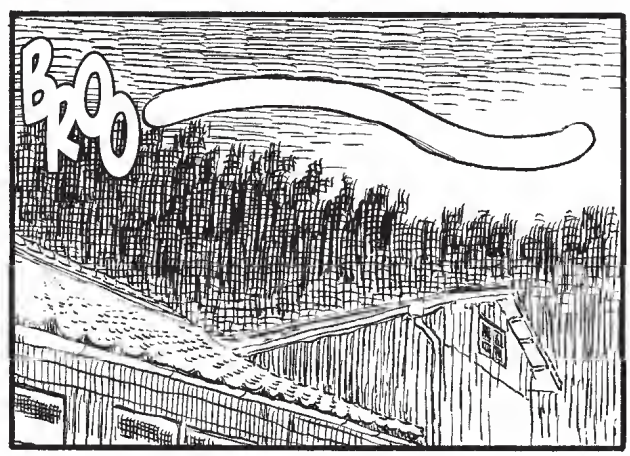
WARNING

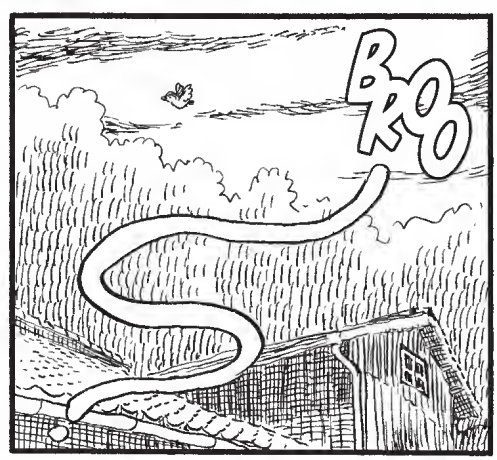
SIREN ON 4 SEC. OFF 8 SEC.

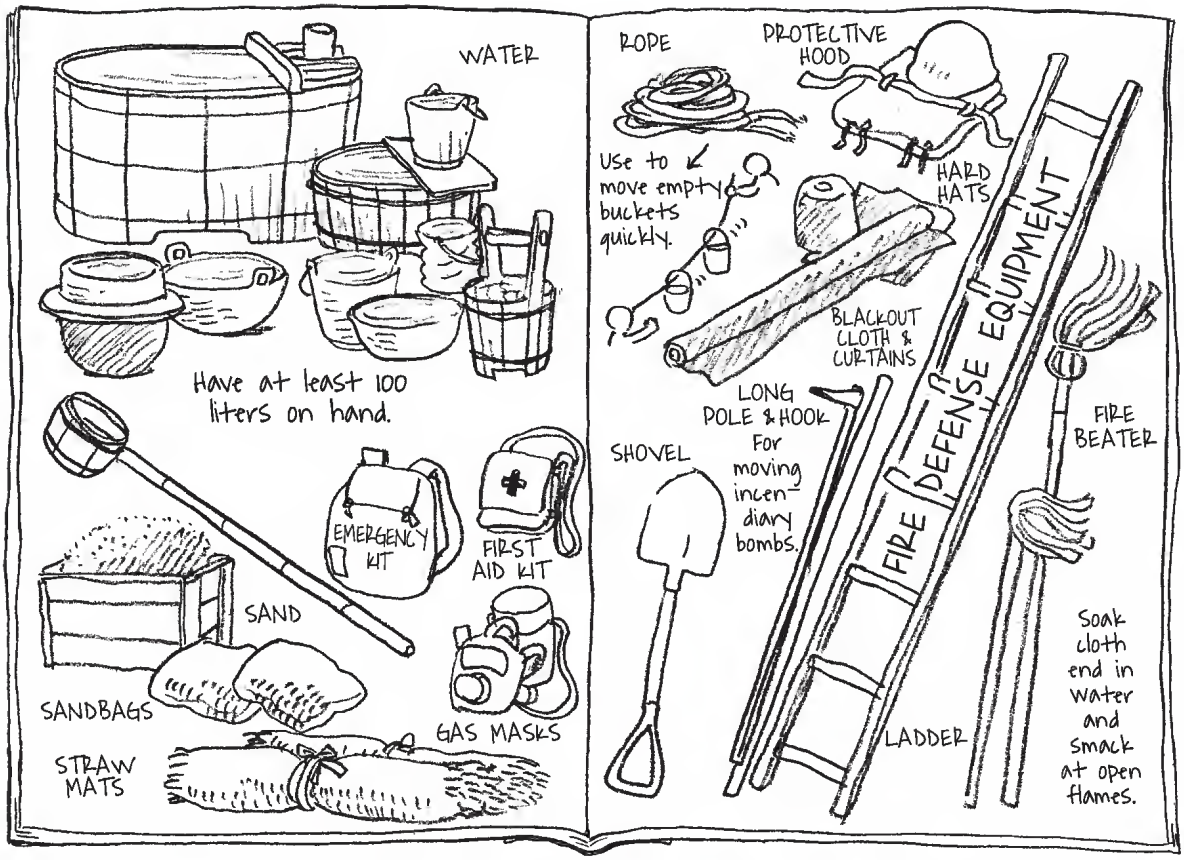
PATTERN REPEATED 10+ TIMES.

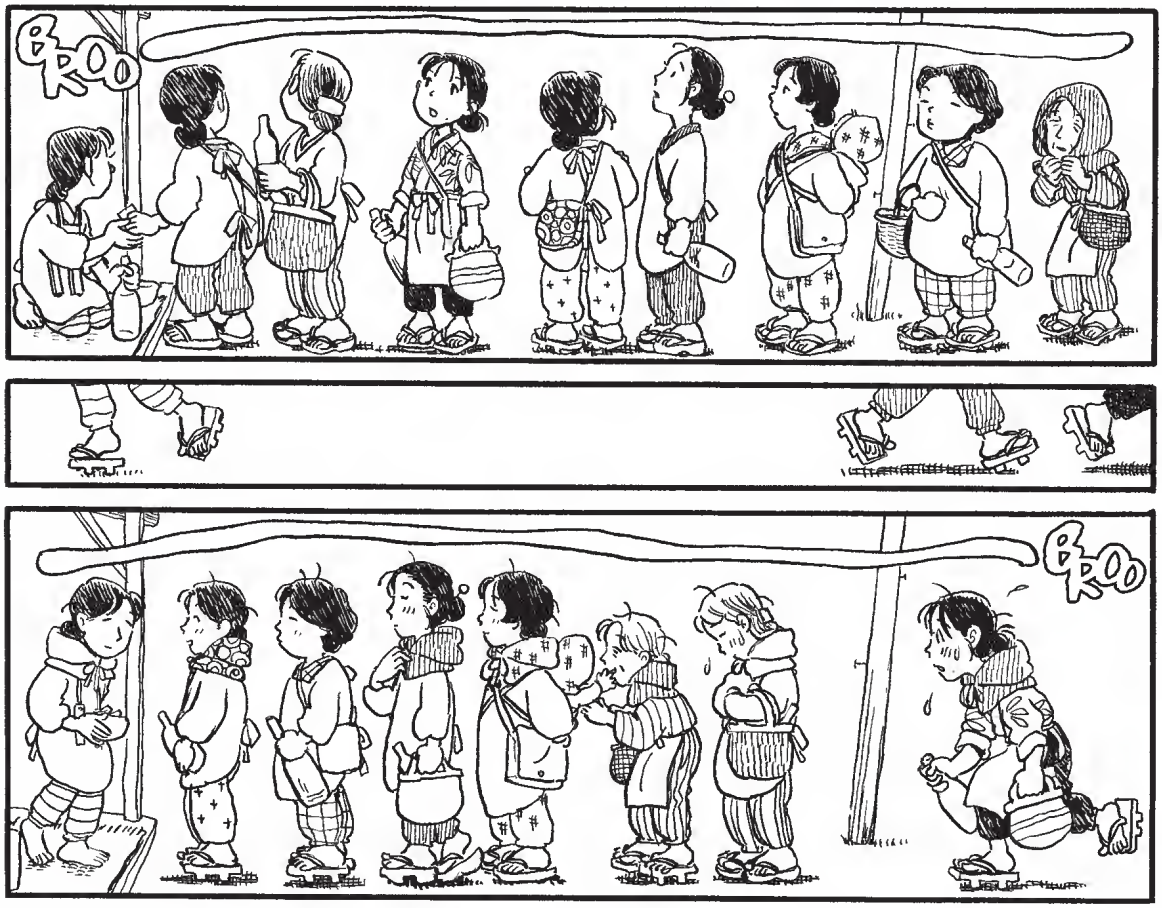
Should an INCENDIARY BOMB fall, take action to extinguish the fire immediately!

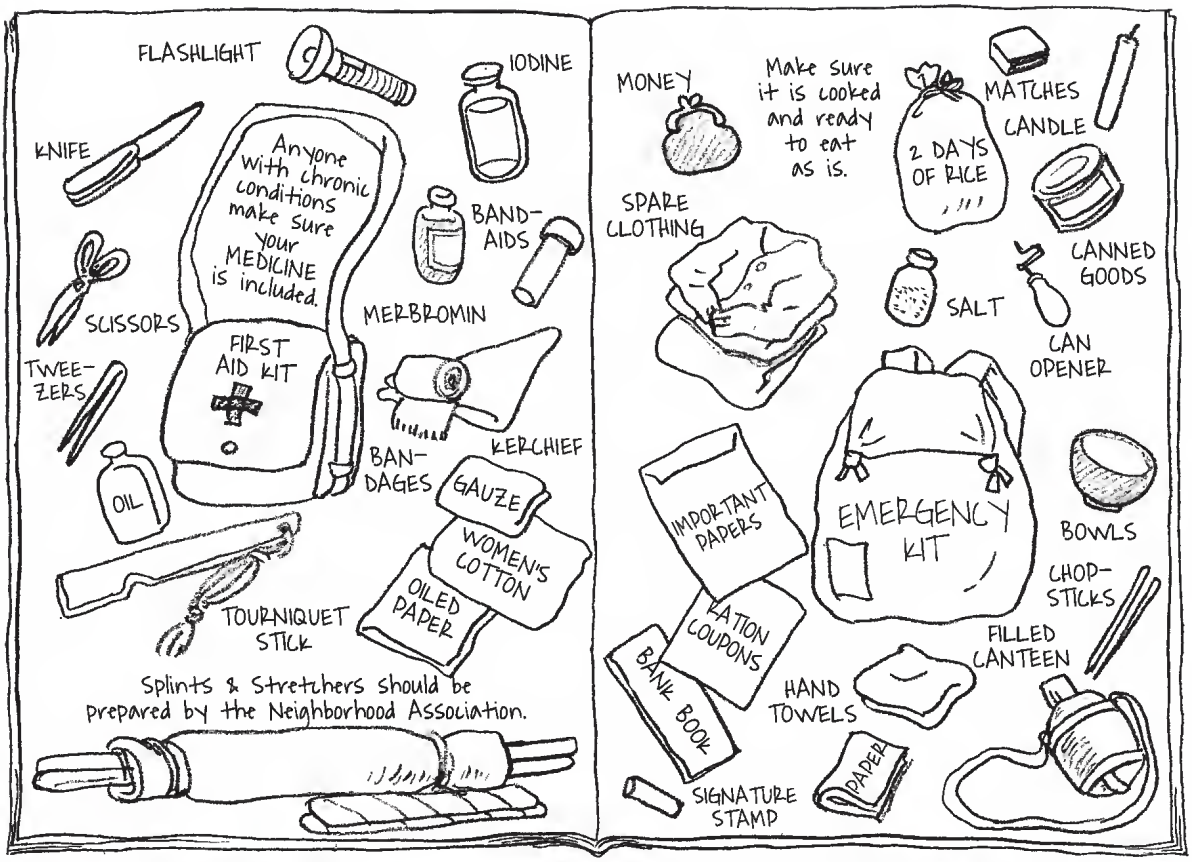


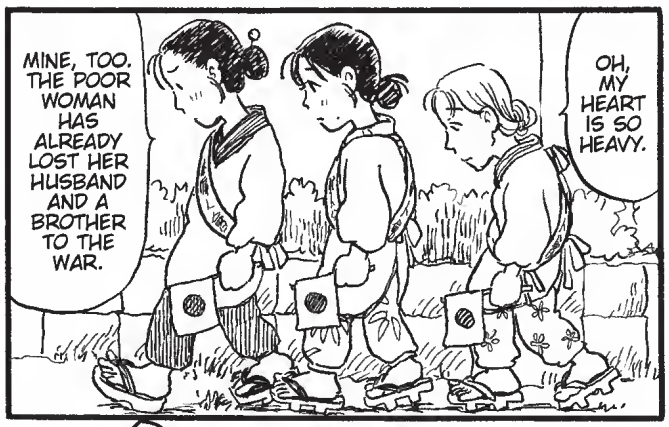


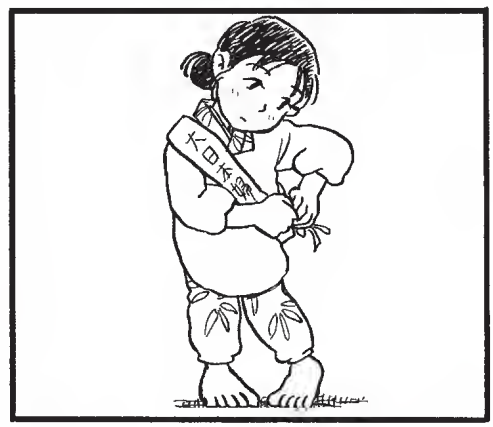


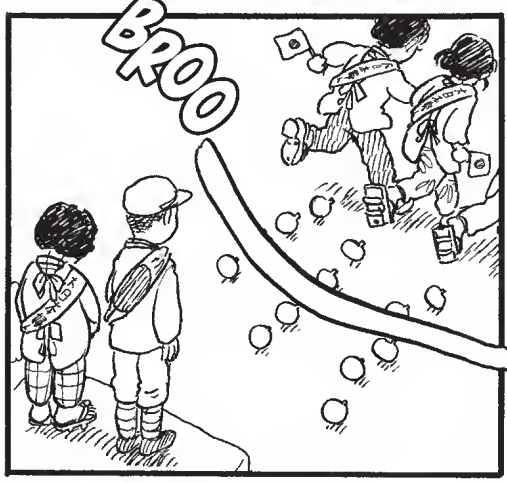

WATER
Have at least 100 liters on hand.
EMERGENCY KIT
FIRST AID KIT
SAND
SANDBAGS
GAS MASKS
STRAW MATS
ROPE
PROTECTIVE HOOD
Use to move empty buckets quickly.
HARD HATS
BLACKOUT CLOTH & CURTAINS
LONG POLE & HOOK For moving incendiary bombs.
SHOVEL
FIRE DEFENSE EQUIPMENT
FIRE BEATER
Soak cloth end in water and smack at open flames.
LADDER

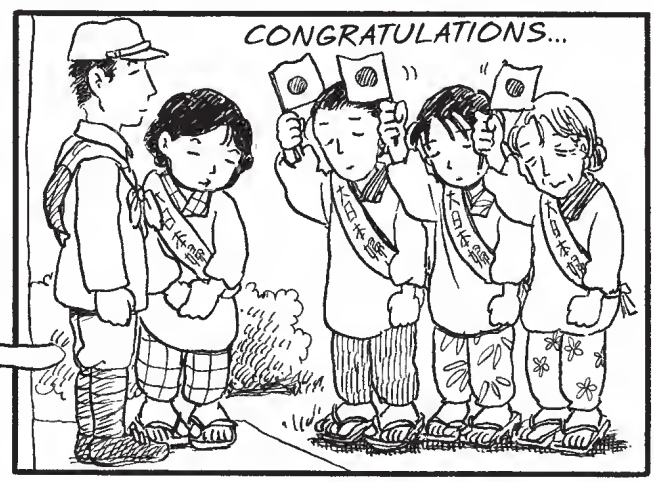

BROO
BROO











Sash: Greater Women's Association

TYPES OF INCENDIARY BOMBS

INCENDIARY LEAF

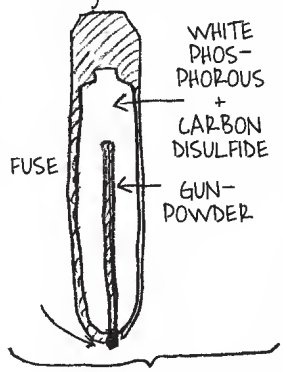
Look like cards 5~10cm big. It catches fire when dry.

A celluloid card painted with white phos-phorous.

Pick up with fire tongs and submerge in a bucket of water. Once all are collected, set in a safe location and burn.

WHITE PHOS-PHOROUS BOMB

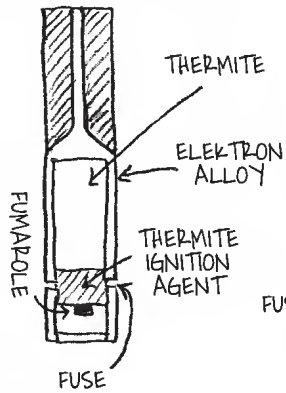
Highly penetrative. Shoots flames across long distance.



Remove anything splashed by this and submerge in water. If it dries, it will catch fire. Do not touch directly.

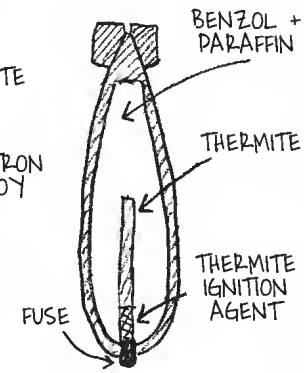
ELEKTRON BOMB

Emits a blinding light and heat of over 2,000-3,000 degrees.

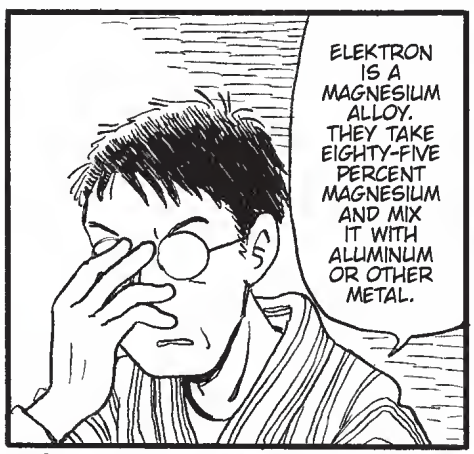


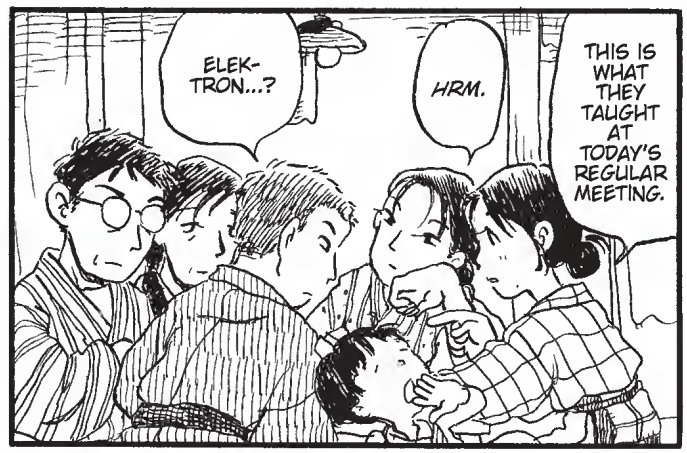
PETROLEUM BOMB

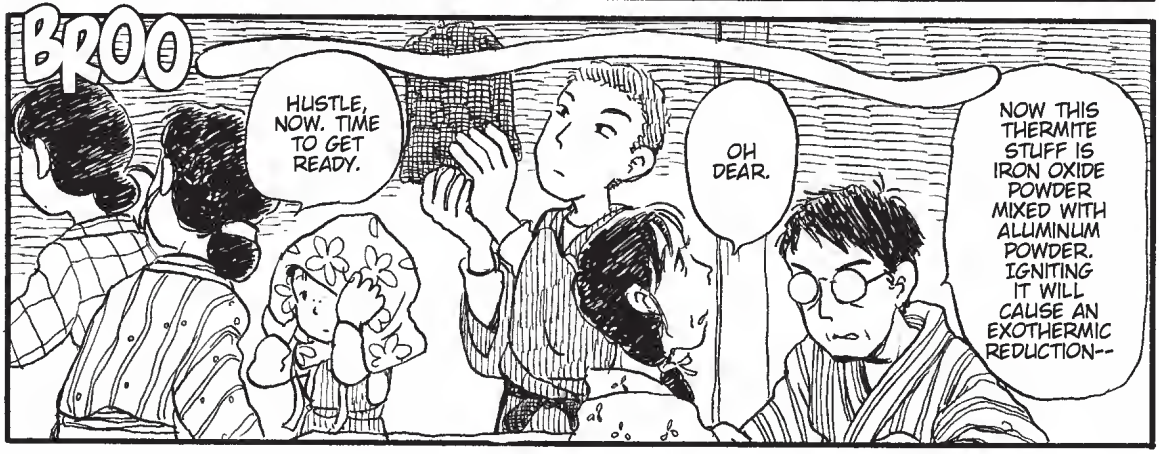
Turns area into a sea of flame.

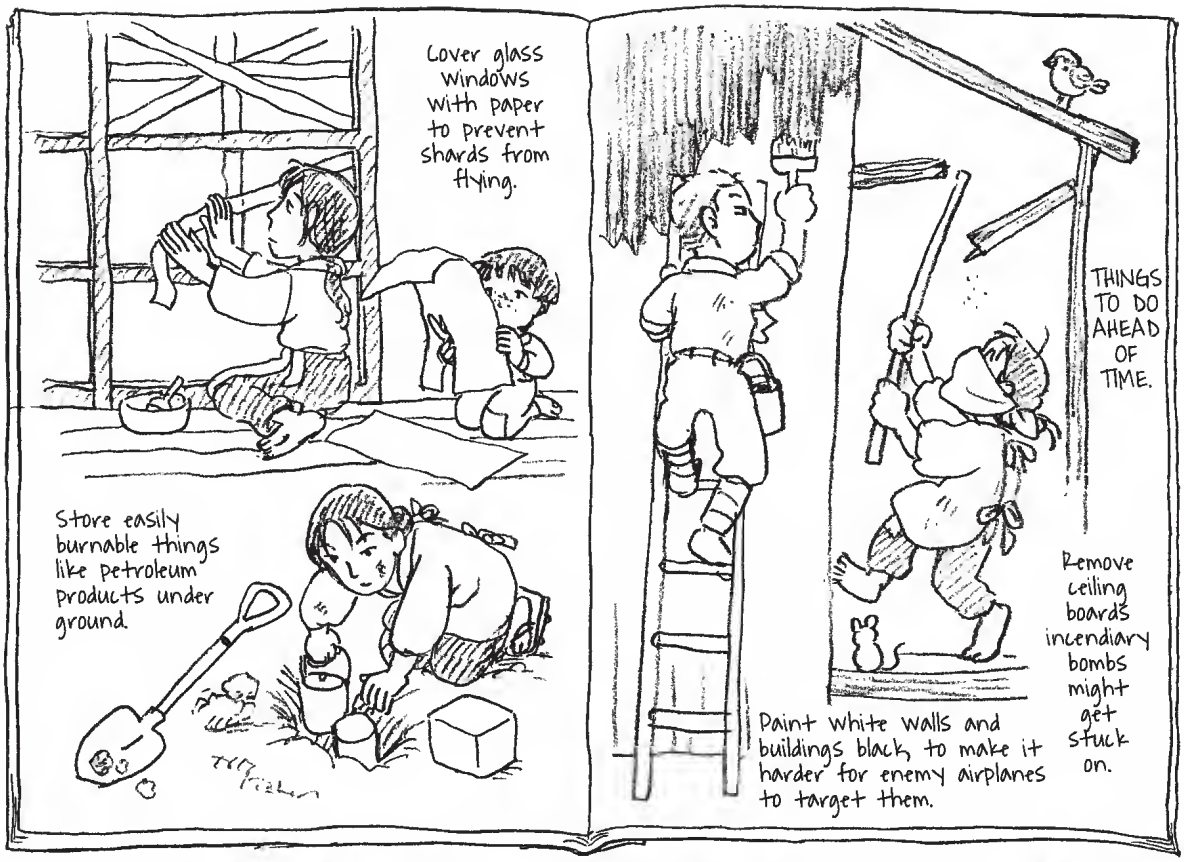


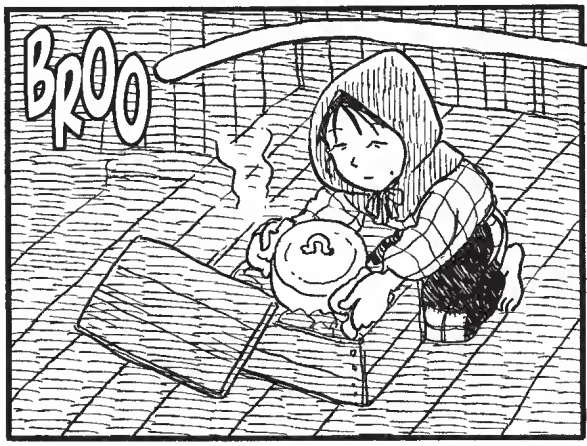
Throw sand or water on it and beat with a wet fire beater. When the fire dies down to a manageable level, use a shovel to carry it away.

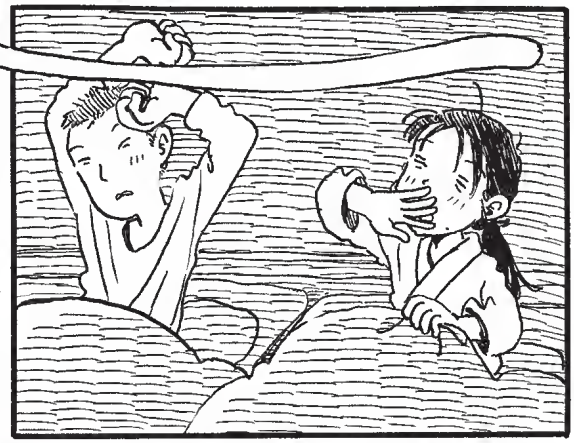




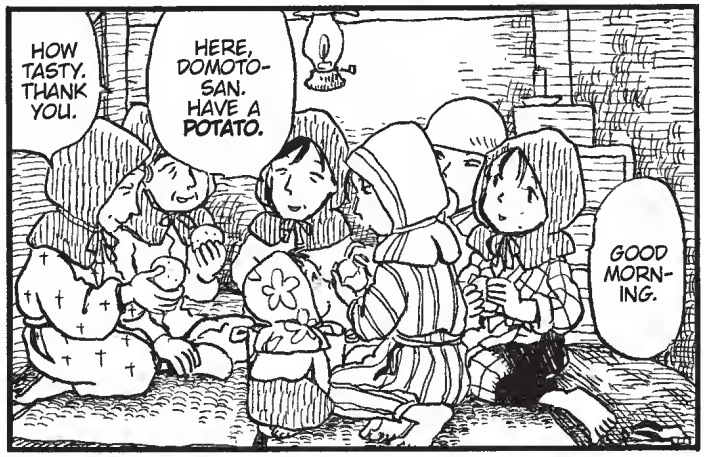


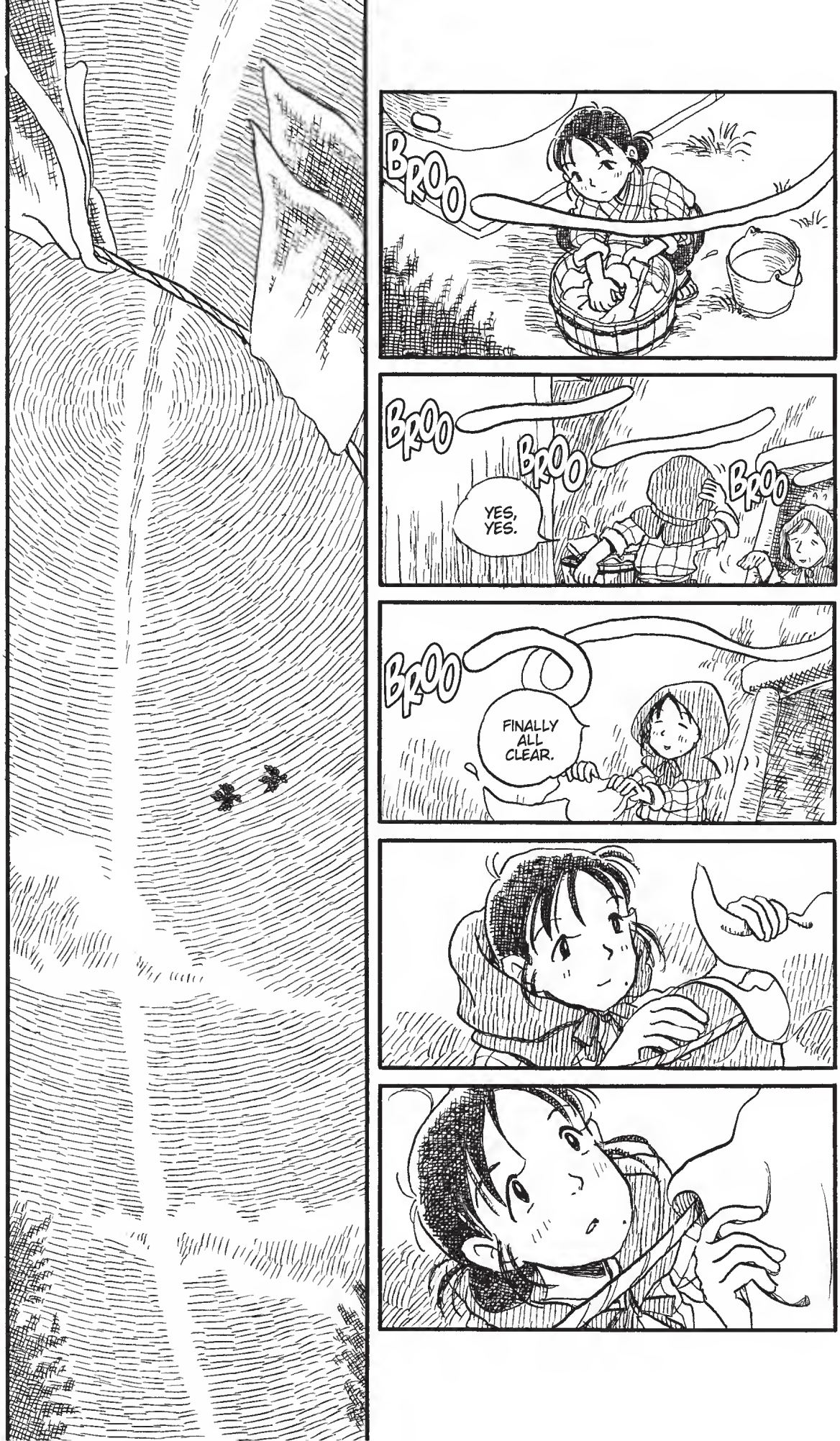

Cover glass windows with paper to prevent shards from flying.
Store easily burnable things like petroleum products under ground.
THINGS TO DO AHEAD OF TIME.
Remove ceiling boards incendiary bombs might get stuck on.
Paint white walls and buildings black, to make it harder for enemy airplanes to target them.

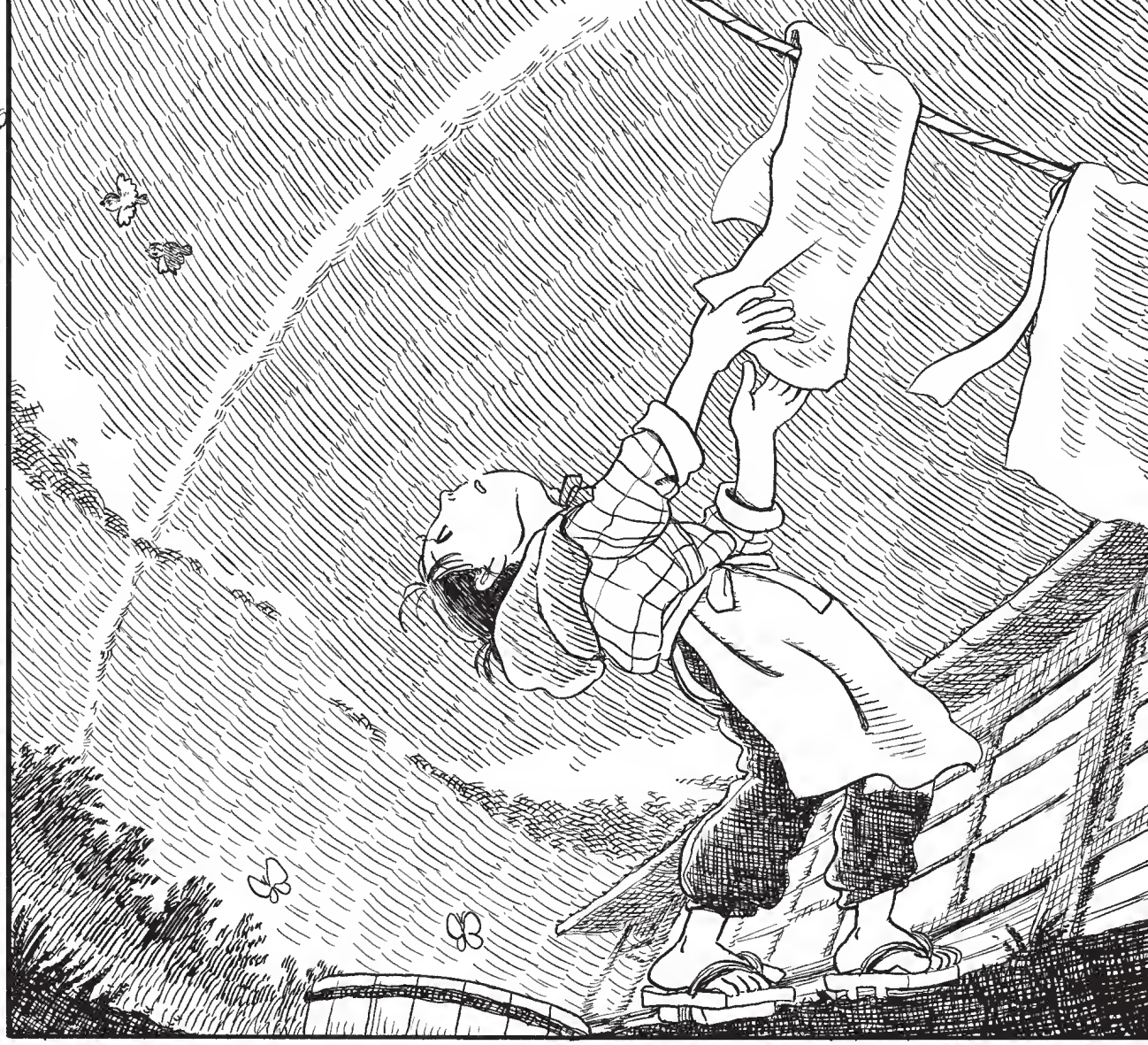

BROO

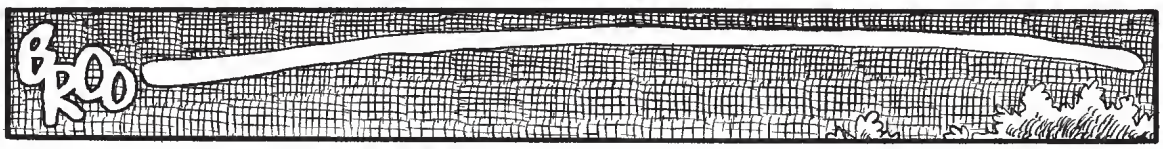


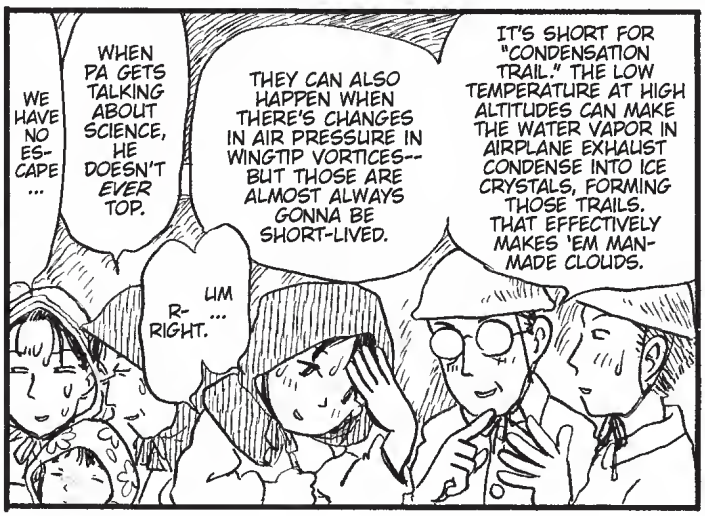
BROO
HAVE A GOOD DAY.
AHA. THERE'S THE ALL-CLEAR.

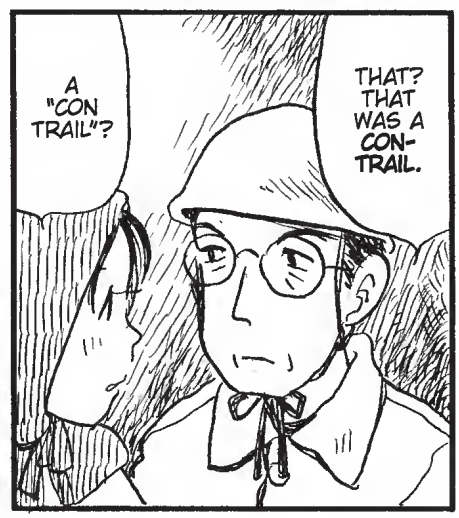

HOW TASTY. THANK YOU.
HERE, DOMOTO-SAN. HAVE A POTATO.
GOOD MORN-ING.


BROO
BROO
BROO
BROO
YES, YES.
BROO
FINALLY ALL CLEAR.



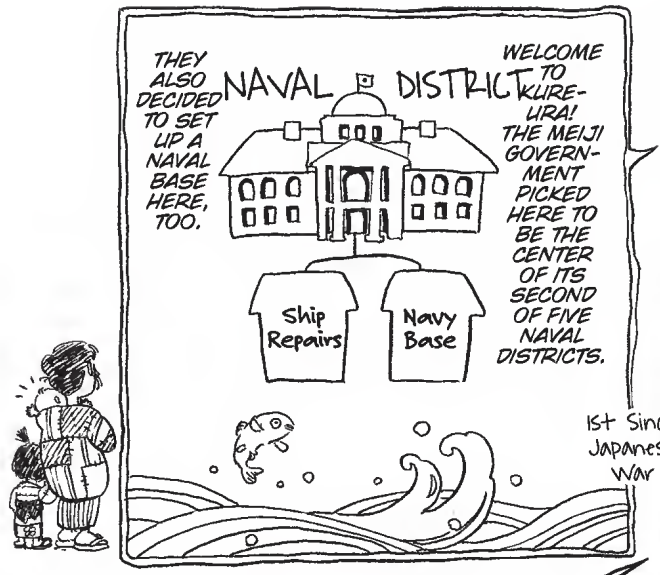


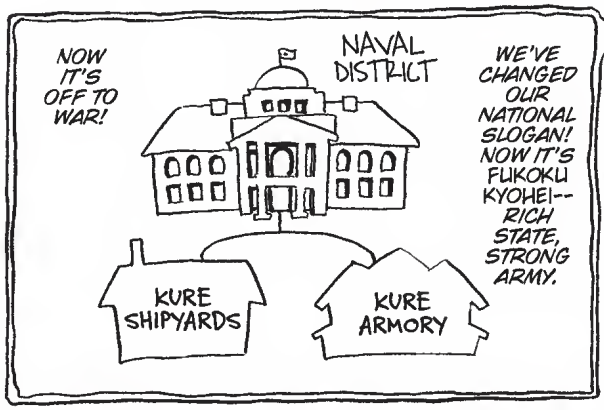


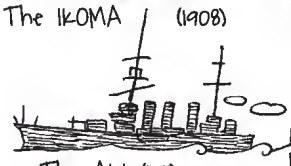


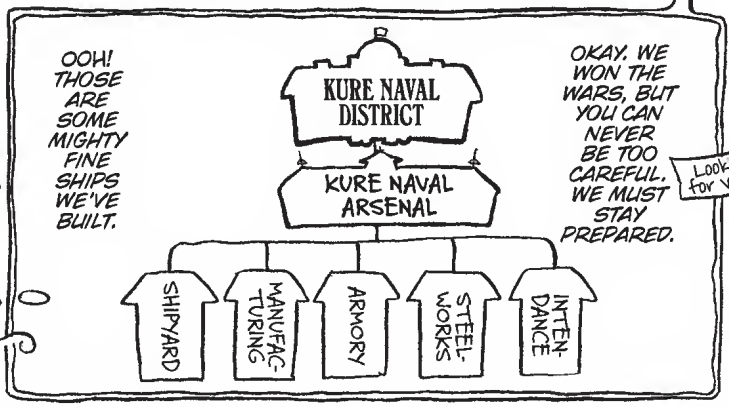
It's thought the first contrail was seen over Japan in 1931. They were still a rare sight when B29s, which flew at very high altitudes, left them in their wakes flying over Kure in 1945.

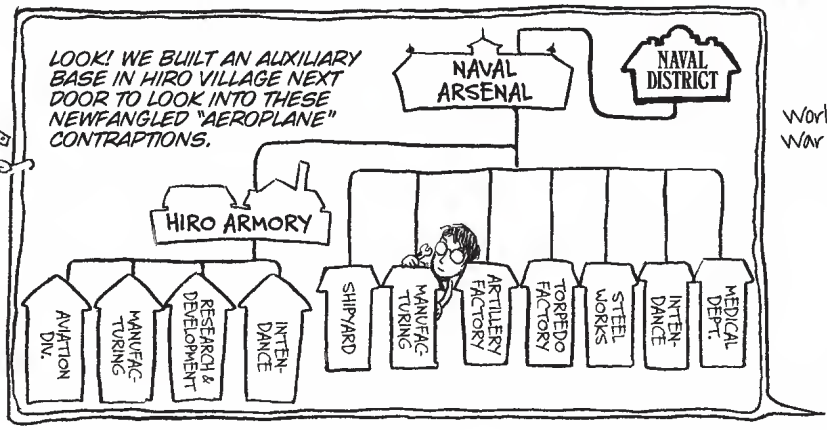
CHAPTER 30
(May, 1945)











1889
1894
1897
1902
1903
1904
1914
1921

Russo-Japanese War

World War I

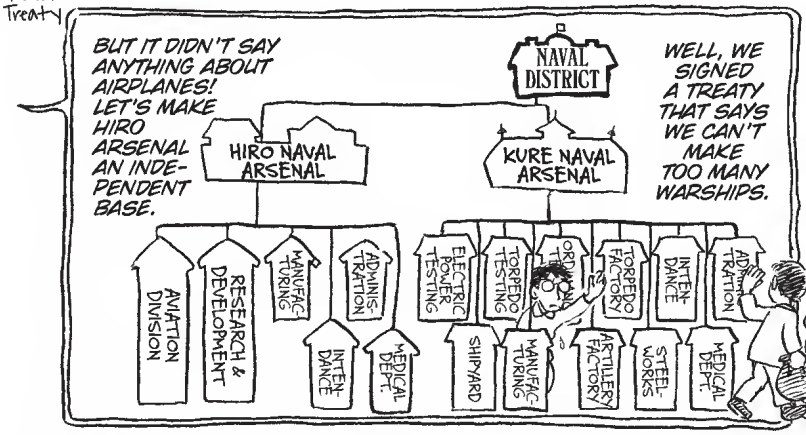
MEIJI ERA

TAISHO ERA

1922 Washington "Five Power" Naval Treaty

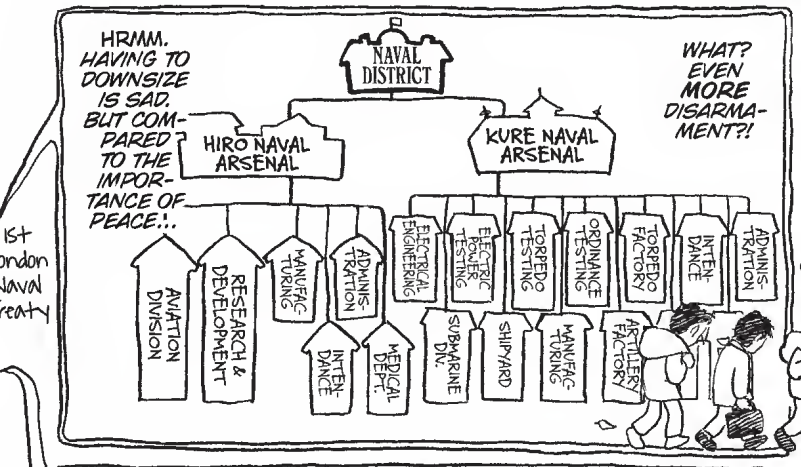
1923

TAISHO ERA



The NAGATO (1920)

Submarine I-52 (1924)



The AKAGI (1927)

The NACHI (1928)

1930 1st London Naval Treaty

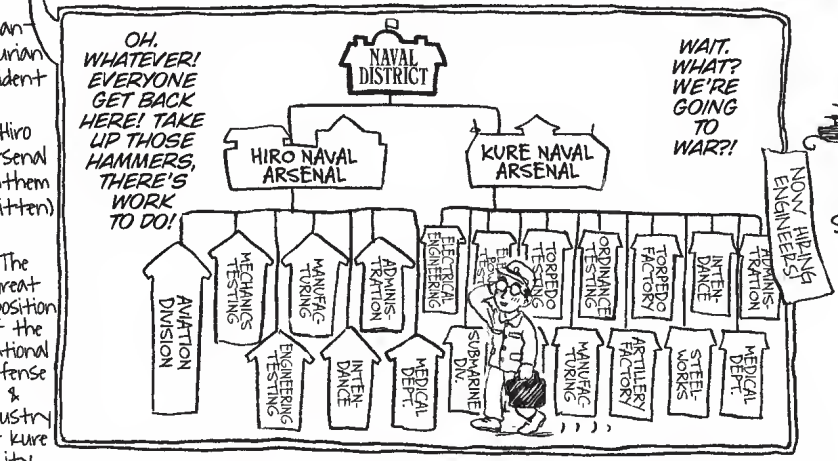
1931

SHOWA ERA

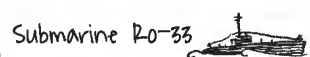
Manchurian Incident

(Hiro Arsenal Anthem Written)

1934



The MOGAMI (1935)

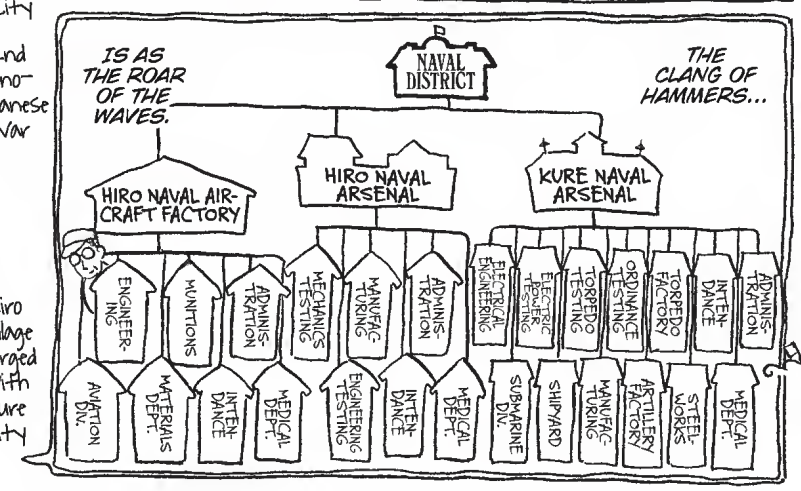


Submarine RO-33 (1935)

The Great Exposition of the National Defense & Industry at Kure City

1935

1937 2nd Sino-Japanese War

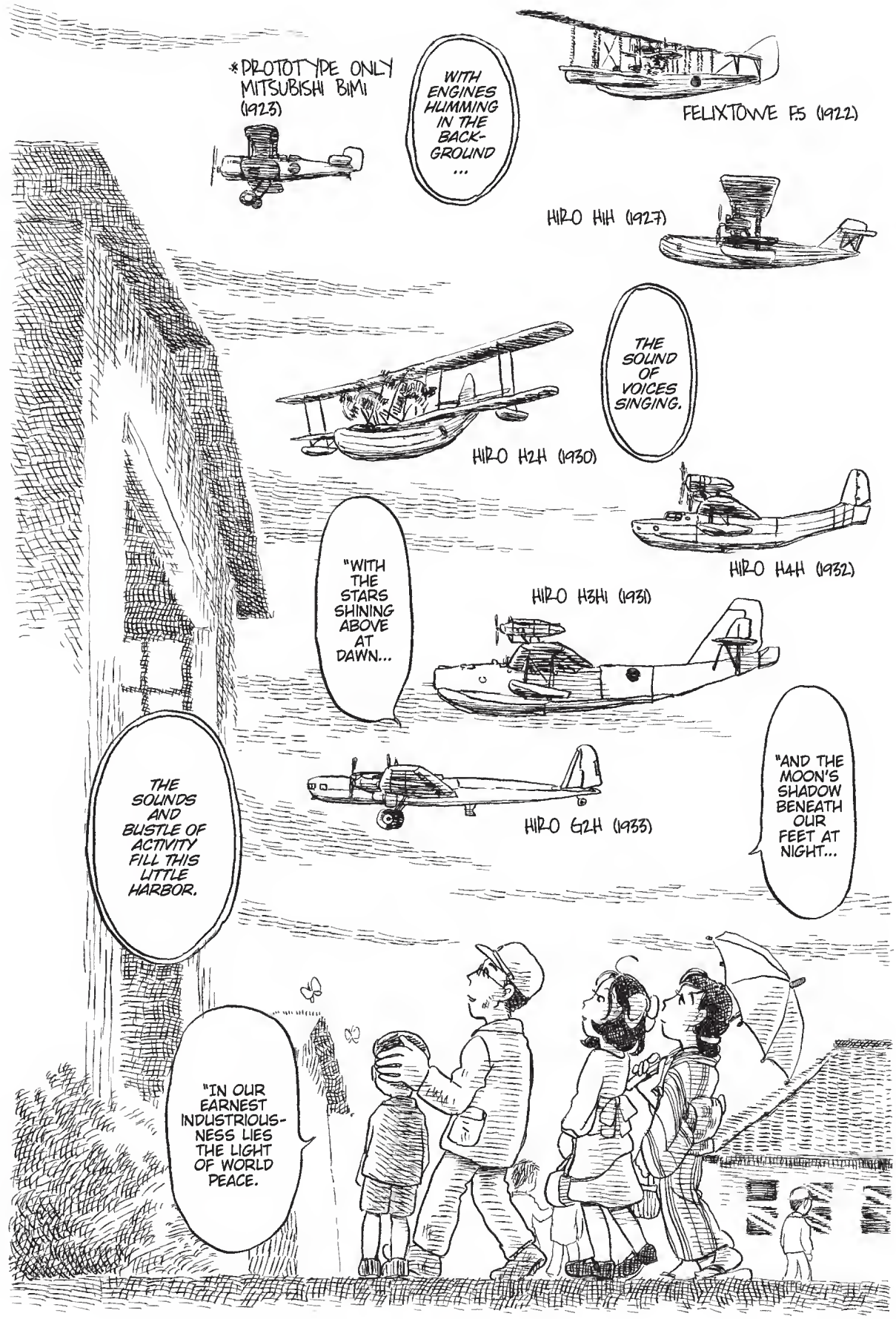


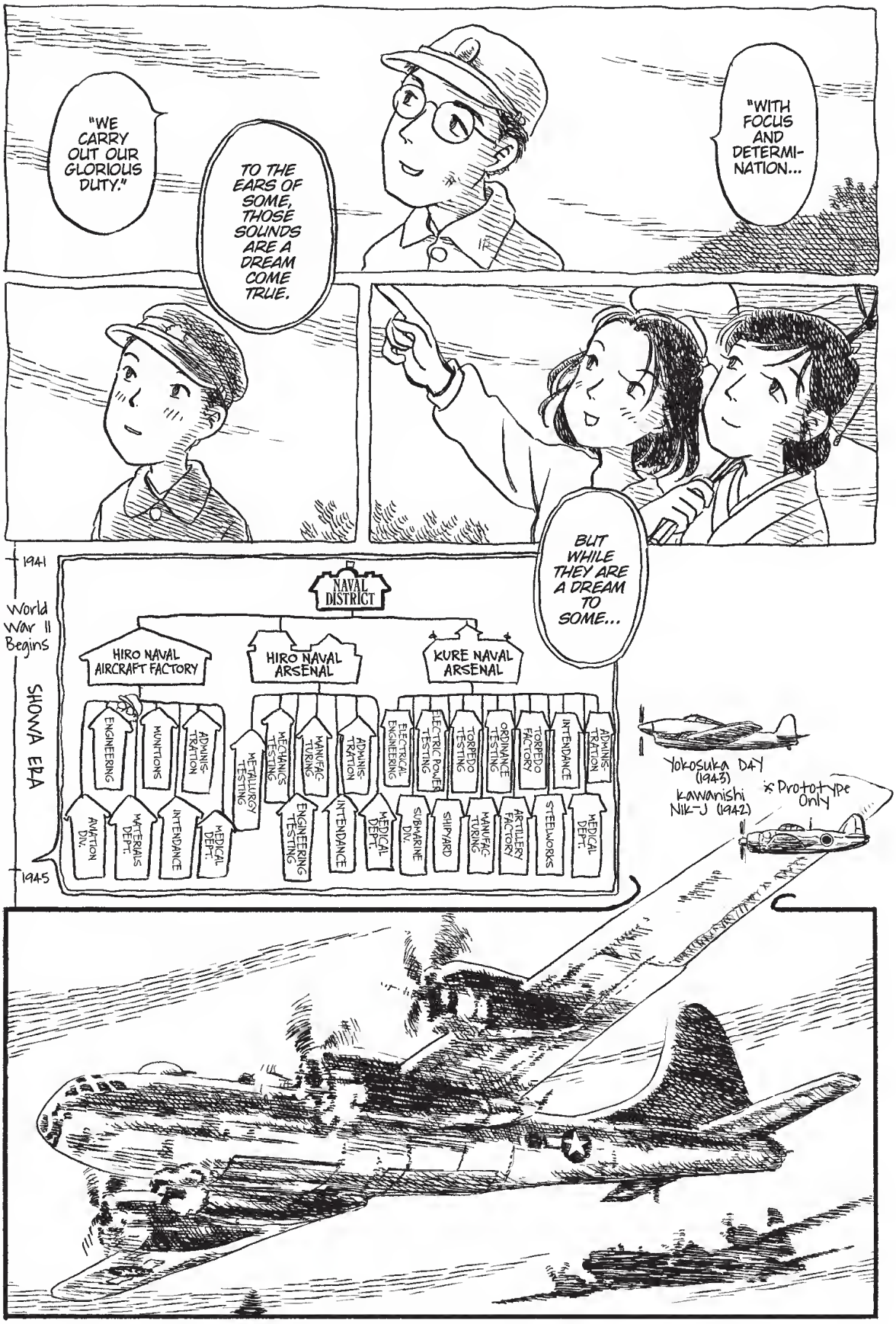
The CHITOSE (1938)

Hiro Village merged with Kure City

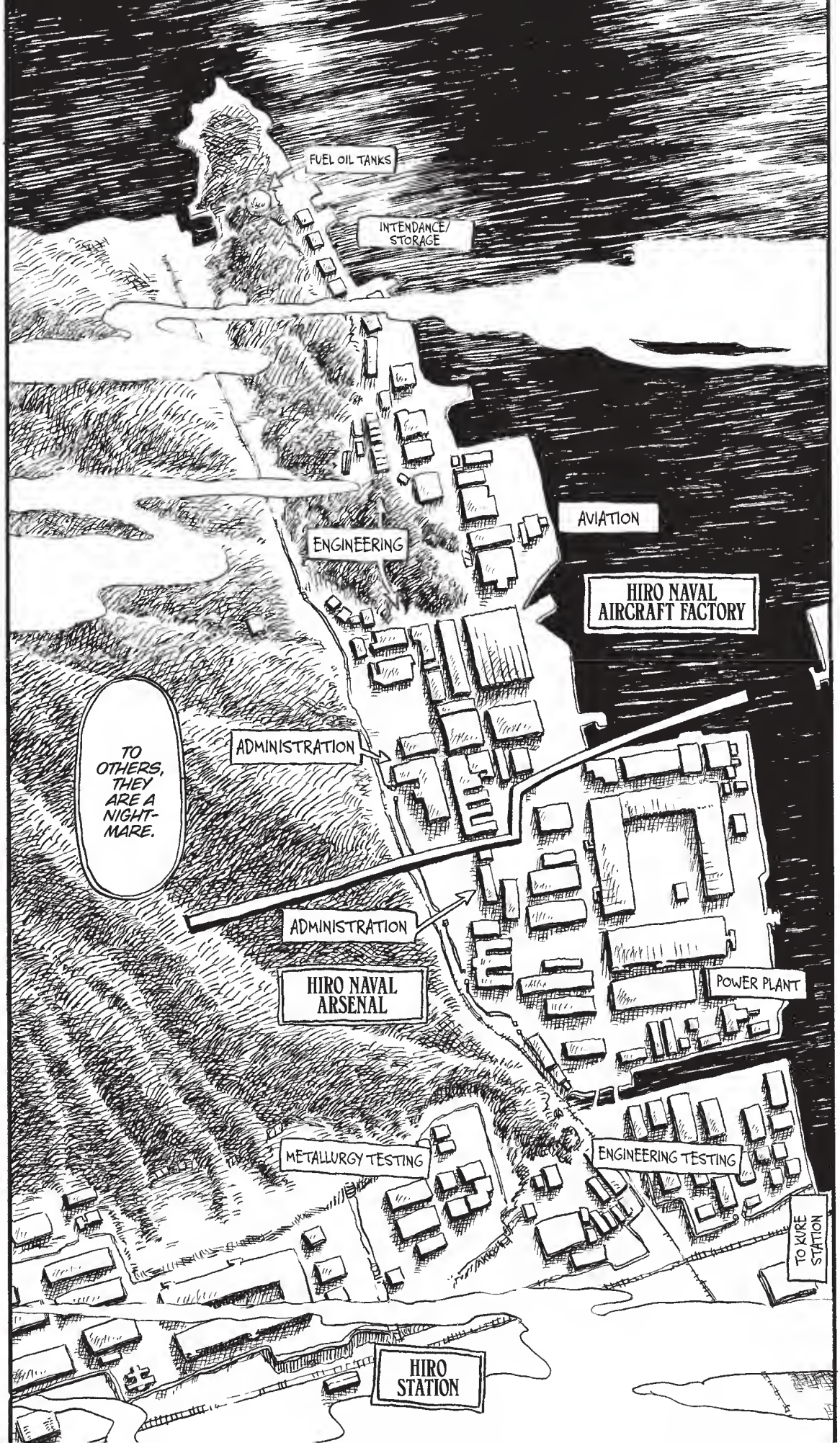
The YAMATO (1941)

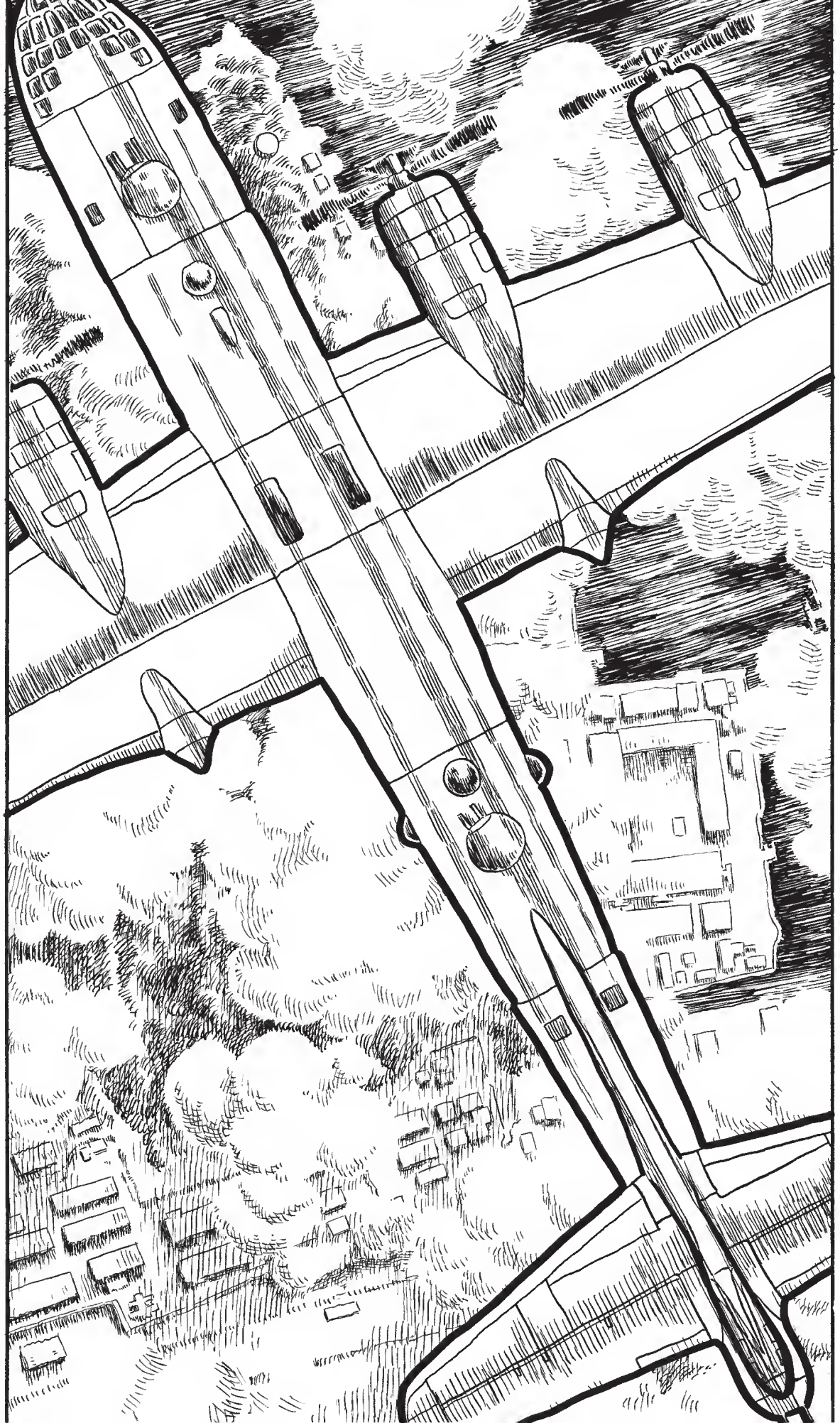
1941


*PROTOTYPE ONLY MITSUBISHI B1M1 (1923)
WITH ENGINES HUMMING IN THE BACK-GROUND ...
FELIXTOWE F5 (1922)
HIRO H1H (1927)
THE SOUND OF VOICES SINGING.
HIRO H2H (1930)
HIRO H4H (1932)
"WITH THE STARS SHINING ABOVE AT DAWN...
HIRO H3H1 (1931)
"AND THE MOON'S SHADOW BENEATH OUR FEET AT NIGHT...
THE SOUNDS AND BUSTLE OF ACTIVITY FILL THIS LITTLE HARBOR.
HIRO G2H (1933)
"IN OUR EARNEST INDUSTRIOUS-NESS LIES THE LIGHT OF WORLD PEACE.



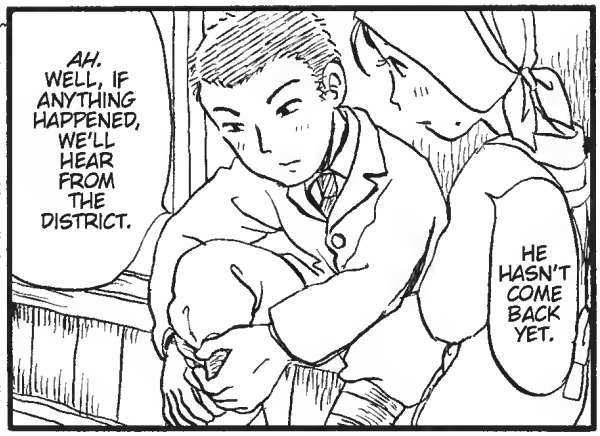
What Entaro is singing here is the second verse of the Hiro Arsenal Anthem. The lyrics, written by Mido Masayoshi, have a peaceful and nostalgic air from the disarmament period of the early thirties. Workers in the Hiro Arsenal matched them to the *Warship March*, the official march of the Imperial Japanese Navy, composed by Setoguchi Tokichi in 1897. The ditty was made the Arsenal's official anthem in 1934.

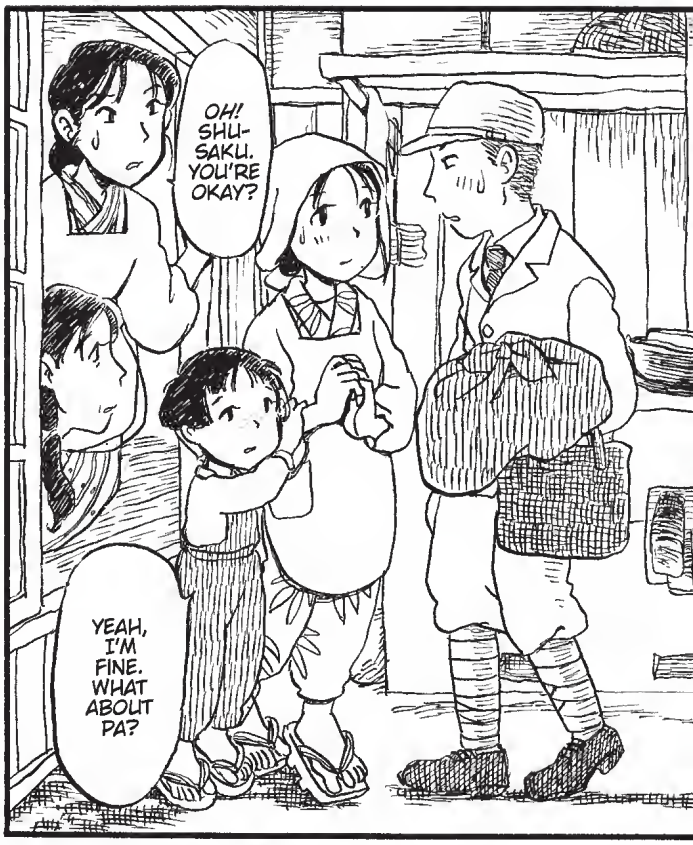

FUEL OIL TANKS
INTENDANCE/ STORAGE
AVIATION
ENGINEERING
HIRO NAVAL AIRCRAFT FACTORY
TO OTHERS, THEY ARE A NIGHT-MARE.
ADMINISTRATION
ADMINISTRATION
HIRO NAVAL ARSENAL
POWER PLANT
METALLURGY TESTING
ENGINEERING TESTING
TO KURE STATION
HIRO STATION

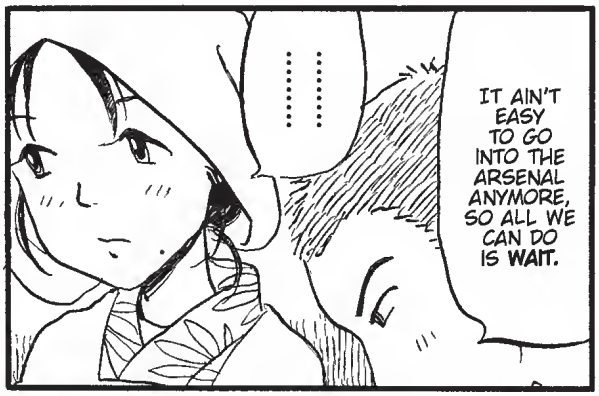


Though sections of both the Hiro Arsenal and the Aircraft Factory were damaged, casualties were extremely light...
I'M HOME.

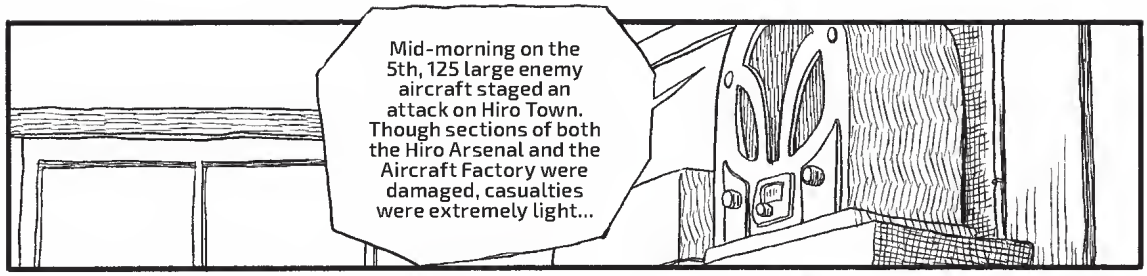
On May 5th, 1945, between 10:27 A.M. and 11:05 A.M., an Allied air strike on the naval facilities in Hiro Town, Kure City, was carried out by upwards of 130 B-29 Superfortresses. Both the Hiro Arsenal and the Hiro Aircraft Factory were largely destroyed. There were over 1,000 casualties in the attack, with 22 navy workers (not servicemen) and 32 civilians reported killed or missing.

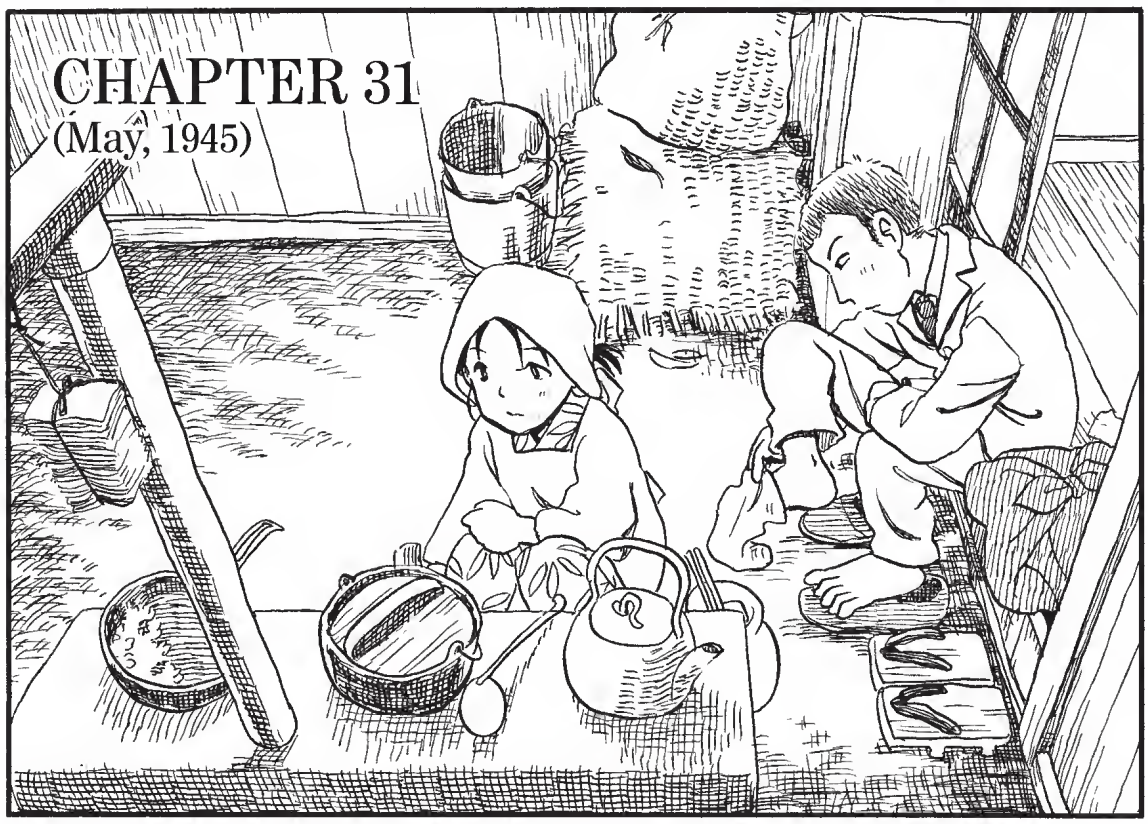


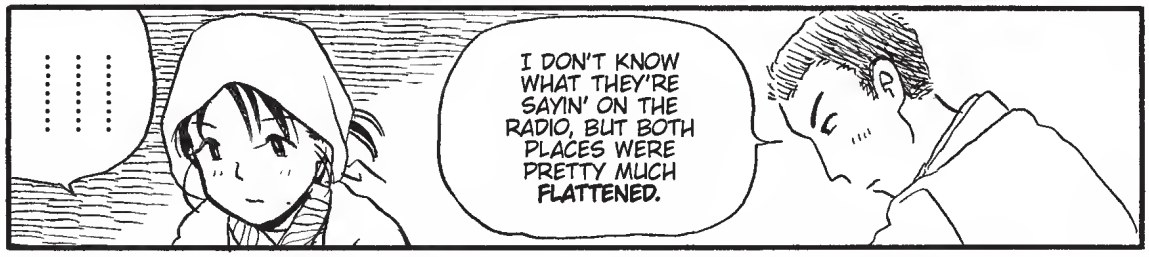


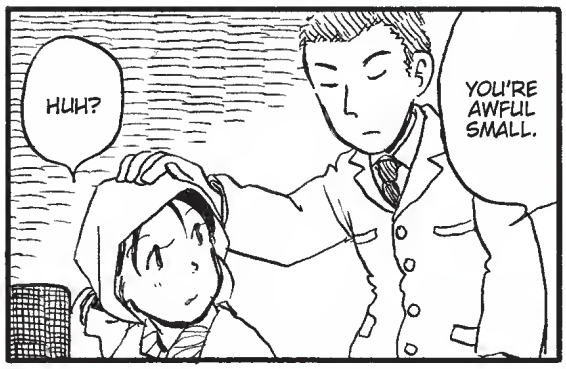


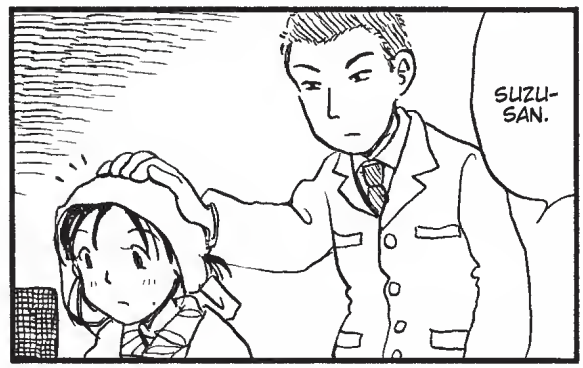
Japanese naval installations were actually open to and welcoming of the public until the late 1930s. However, once the war began in earnest in 1941, the government strictly locked down access to them in order to prevent espionage.


Mid-morning on the 5th, 125 large enemy aircraft staged an attack on Hiro Town. Though sections of both the Hiro Arsenal and the Aircraft Factory were damaged, casualties were extremely light...

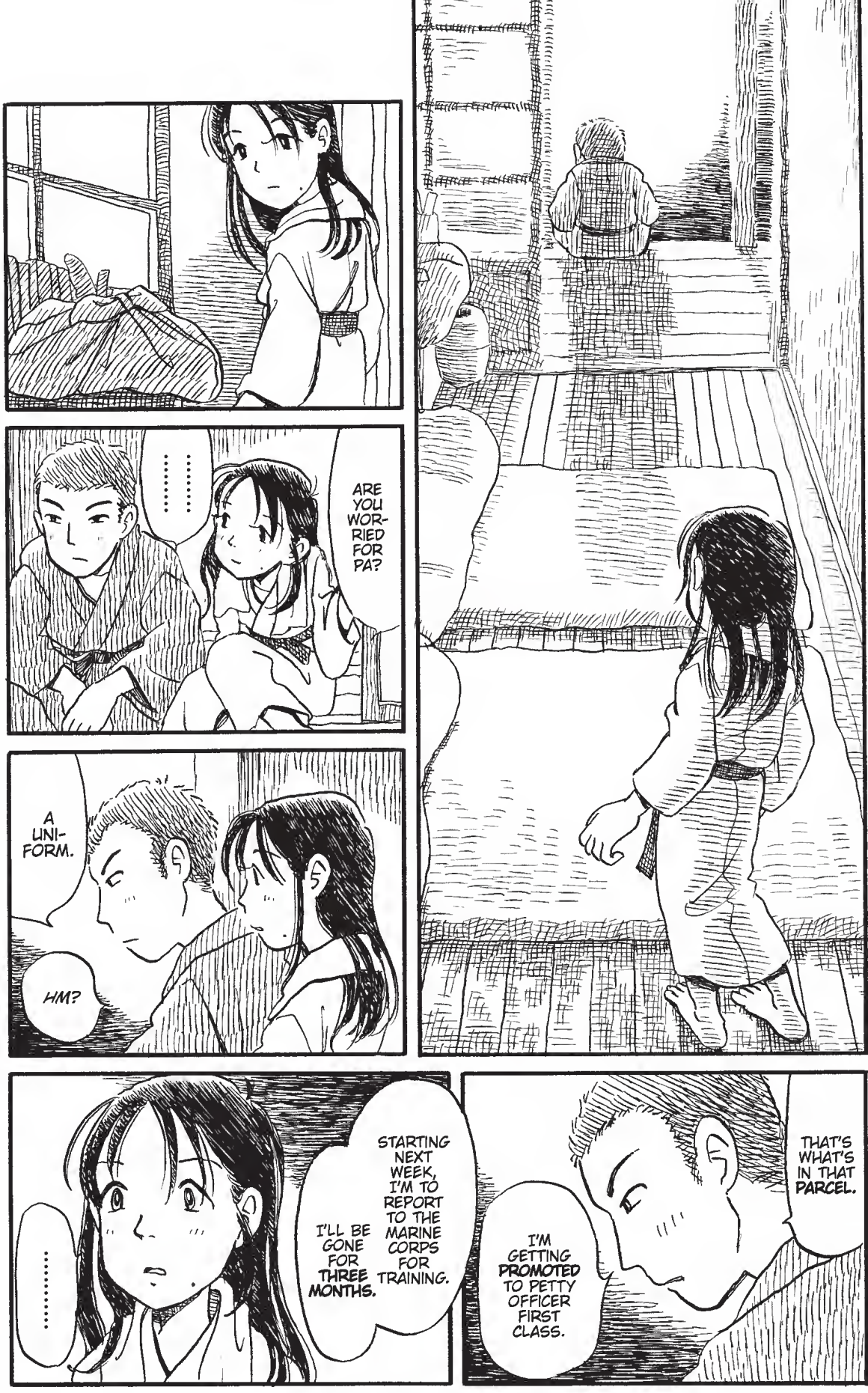

CHAPTER 31
(May, 1945)


.....
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'RE SAYIN' ON THE RADIO, BUT BOTH PLACES WERE PRETTY MUCH FLATTENED.

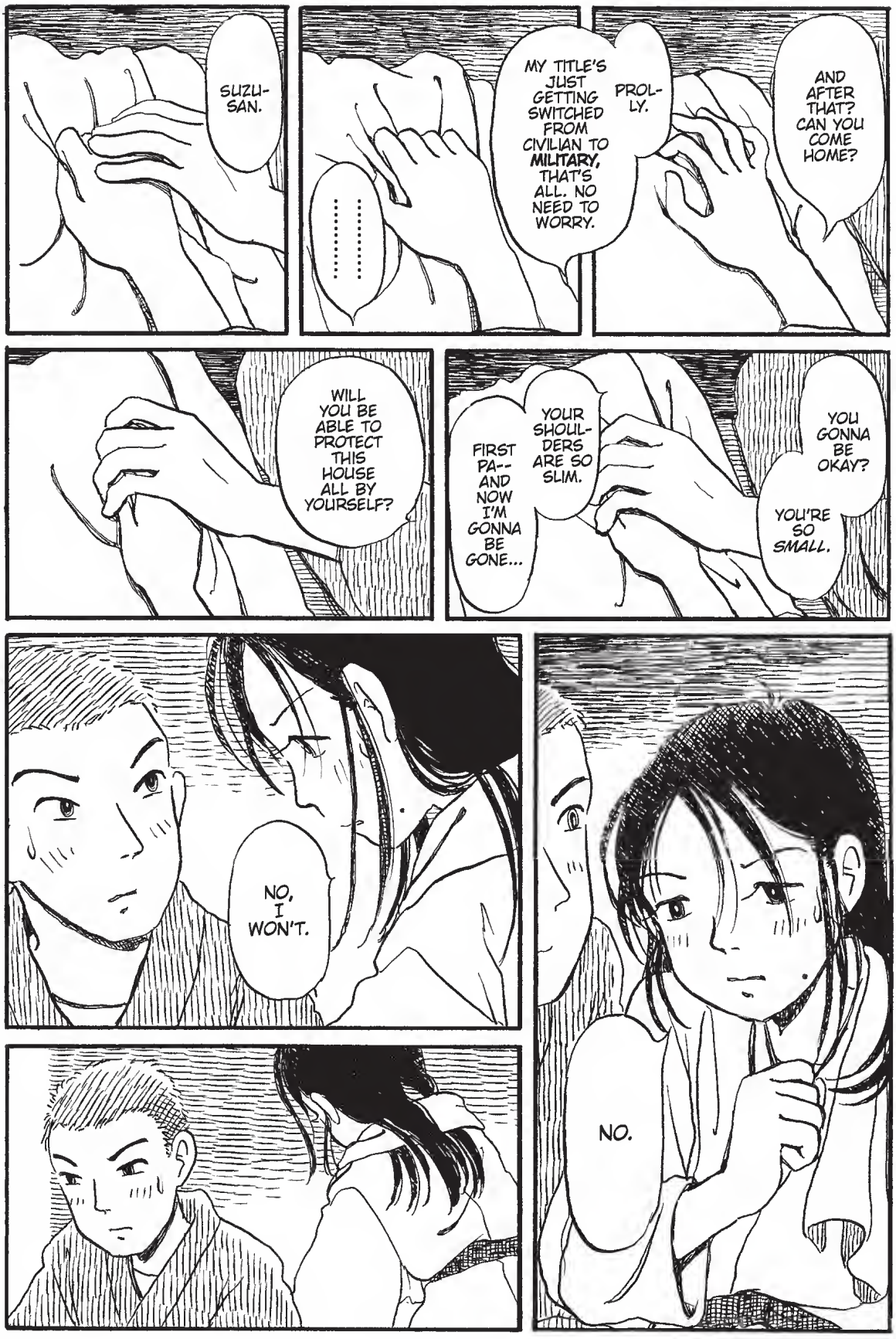

HUH?
YOU'RE AWFUL SMALL.


SUZU-SAN.

YOU'RE STILL SMALL STAND-ING UP.
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?
NOTHING. YOU'RE SMALL, SO I SAID YOU'RE SMALL.
.....
UMM...
OH!
WHAT'S IN THAT PARCEL YOU BROUGHT HOME?
LET'S EAT.
PA'S PROBABLY GOT CLEAN-UP TO DO, SO HE'LL BE LATE.
O-OH...
THEY COULD COME AGAIN, YOU KNOW. BEST WE ALL GET TO BED EARLY, JUST IN CASE.
GOOD POINT.
.....

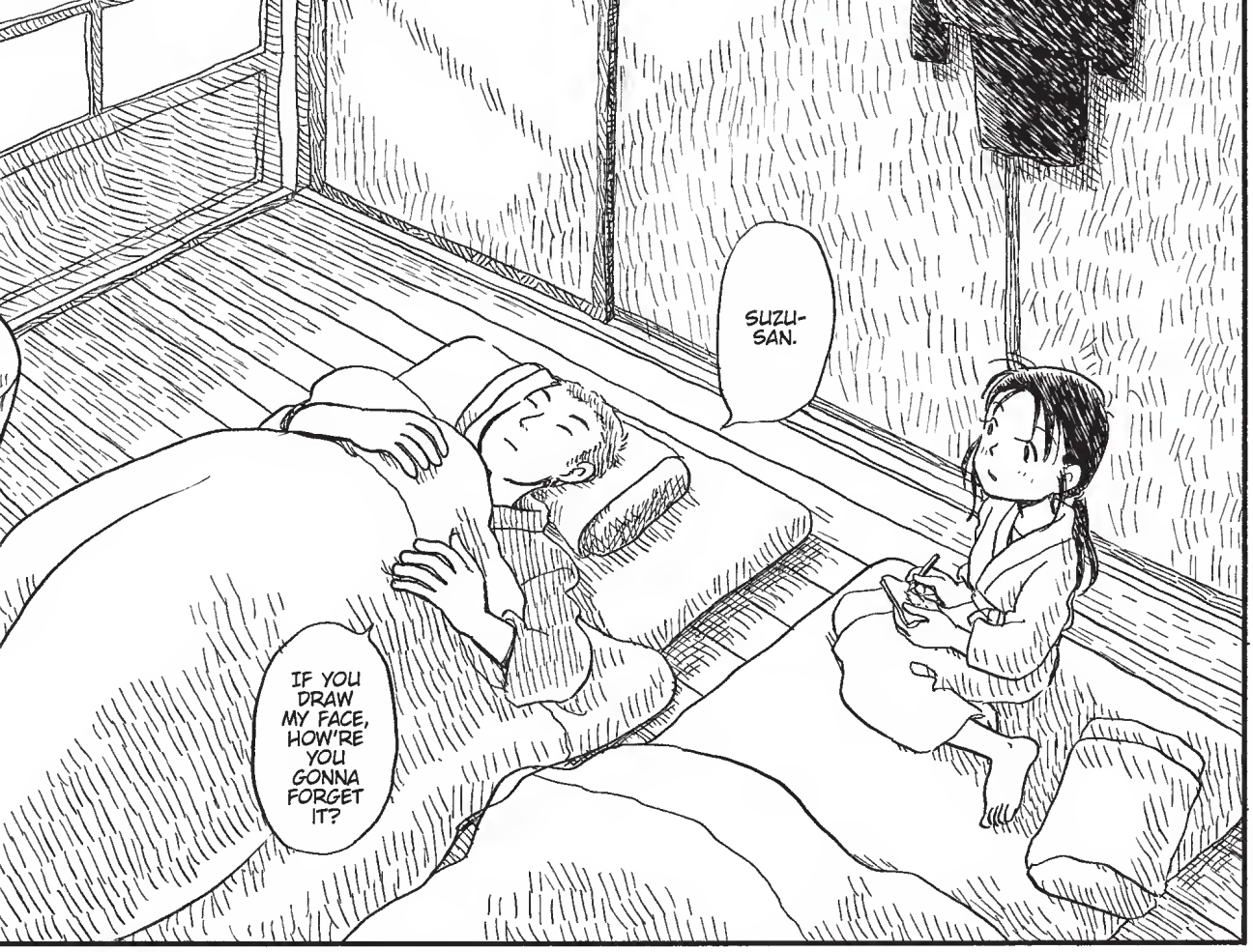


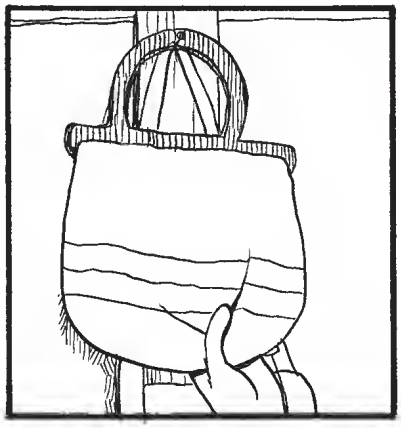
Unlike the United States Marine Corps, the Japanese marine corps were not a special fighting unit, but instead the division responsible for training new and low ranking recruits. There was at least one group stationed at each naval district

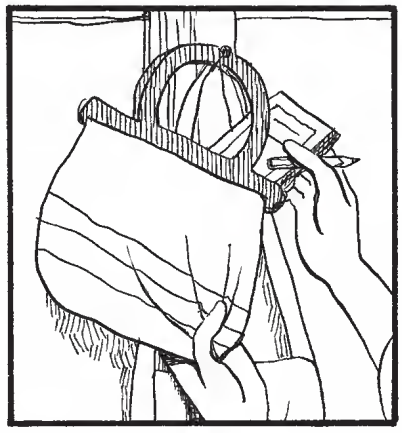

SUZU-SAN.
.....
MY TITLE'S JUST GETTING SWITCHED FROM CIVILIAN TO MILITARY, THAT'S ALL. NO NEED TO WORRY.
PROL-LY.
AND AFTER THAT? CAN YOU COME HOME?
WILL YOU BE ABLE TO PROTECT THIS HOUSE ALL BY YOURSELF?
FIRST PA-- AND NOW I'M GONNA BE GONE...
YOUR SHOUL-DERS ARE SO SLIM.
YOU GONNA BE OKAY?
YOU'RE SO SMALL.
NO, I WON'T.
NO.

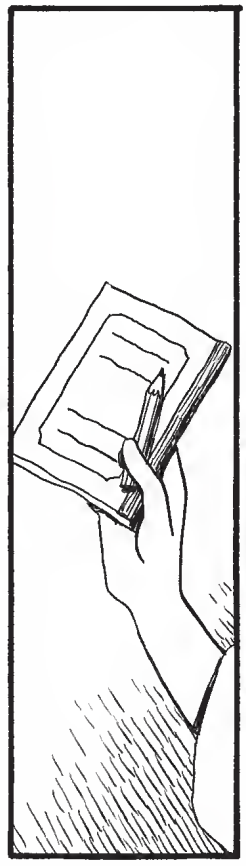
DON'T WORRY, THOUGH. IT'LL ALL BE OKAY.
I'LL WAIT HERE FOR YOU AND PROTECT THIS HOME.
SUZU-SAN...
BECAUSE IF I'M NOT HERE WAITING, I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL EVER FIND YOU AGAIN.
BUT IF I CAN'T SEE YOU FOR THREE WHOLE MONTHS, I MIGHT FORGET WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE.
I'M SORRY. THAT WAS A LIE.
SHU-SAKU-SAN...
I LIKE YOU AN AWFUL LOT.

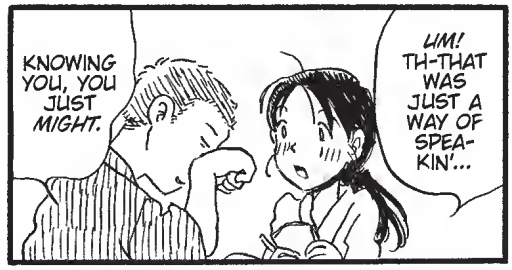
Sign: Hiro Naval Aircraft Factory

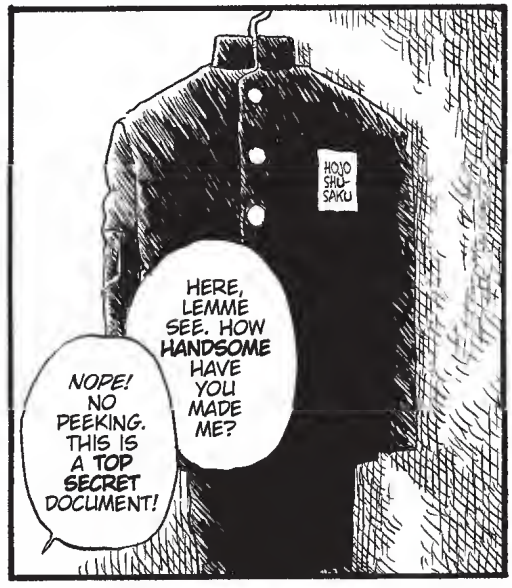

SUZU-SAN.
IF YOU DRAW MY FACE, HOW'RE YOU GONNA FORGET IT?

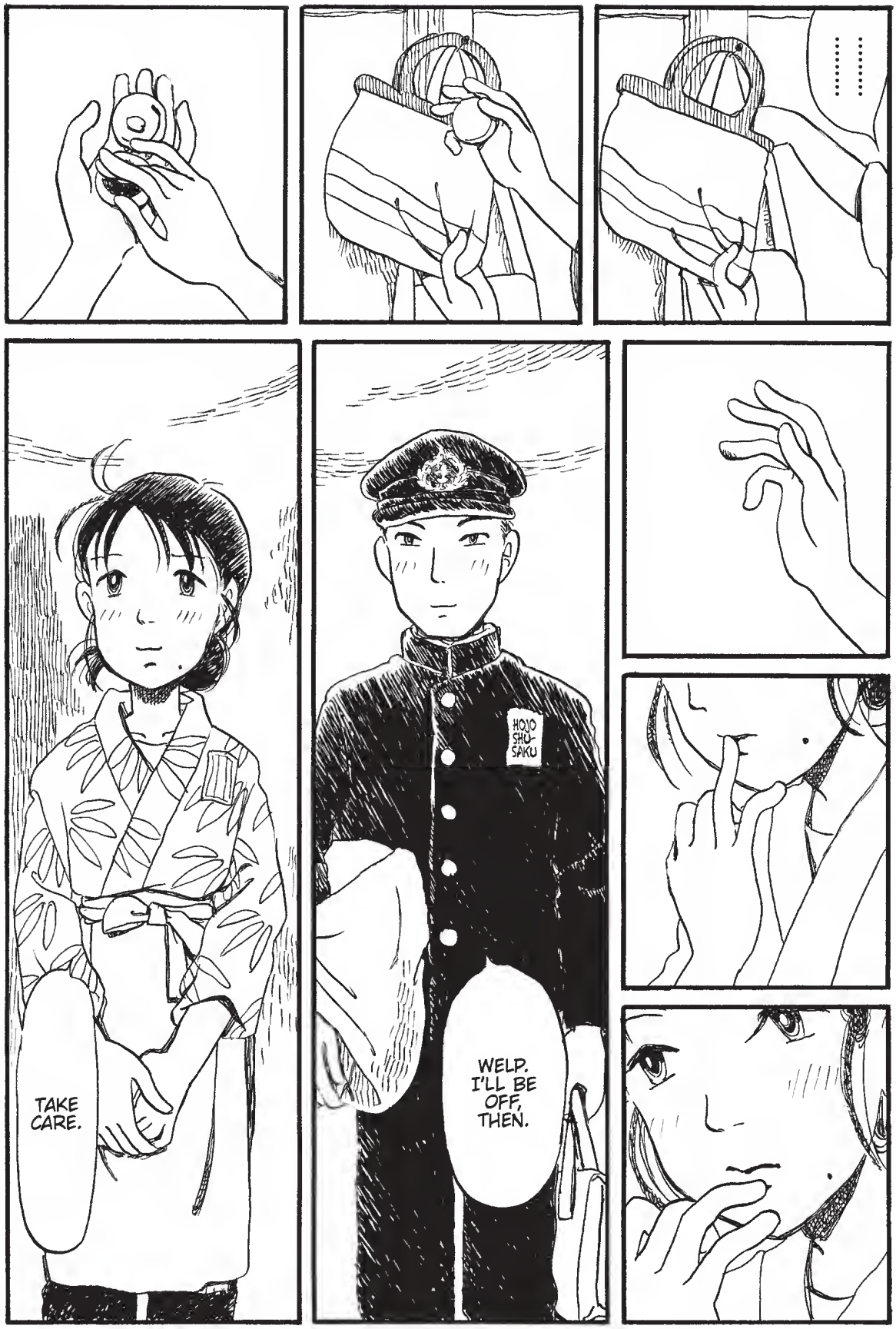




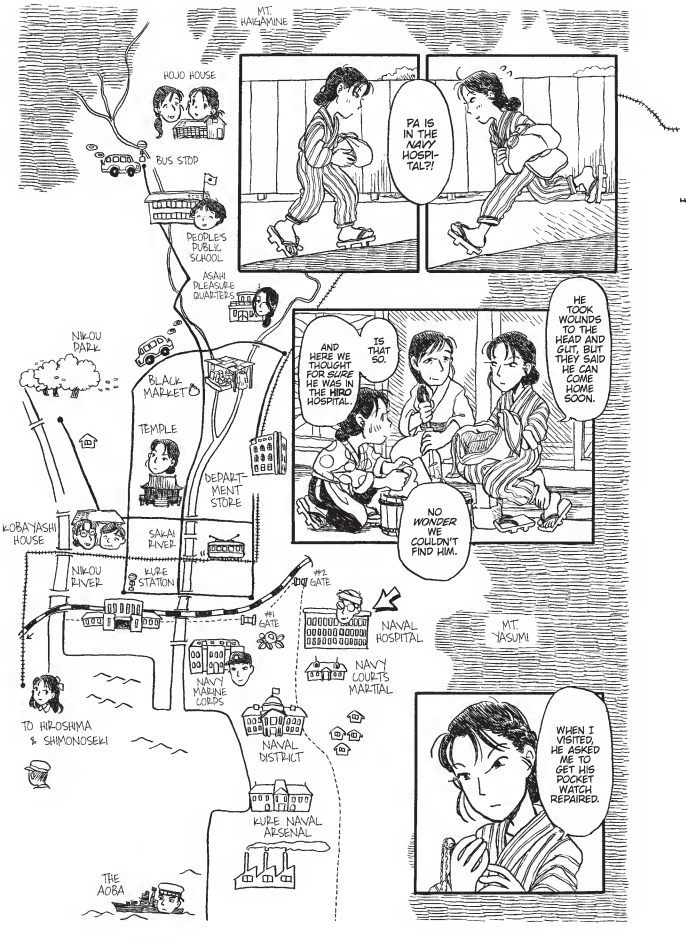


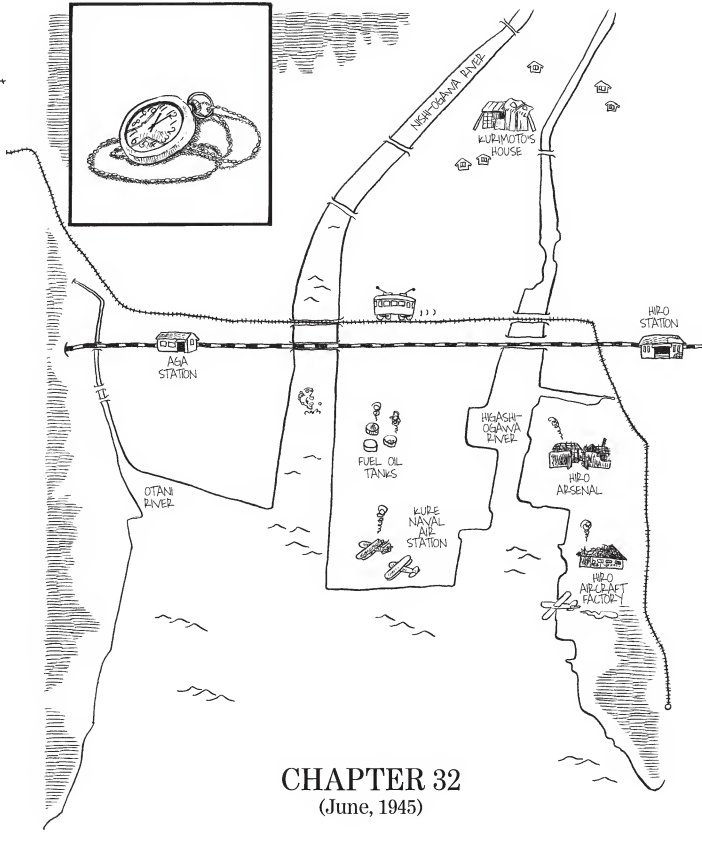

KNOWING YOU, YOU JUST *MIGHT.*
UM! TH-THAT WAS JUST A WAY OF SPEA-KIN'...


HOJO SHU-SAKU
HERE, LEMME SEE. HOW **HANDSOME** HAVE YOU MADE ME?
NOPE! NO PEEKING. THIS IS A **TOP SECRET** DOCUMENT!


.....
HOJO SHU-SAKU
WELP. I'LL BE OFF, THEN.
TAKE CARE.

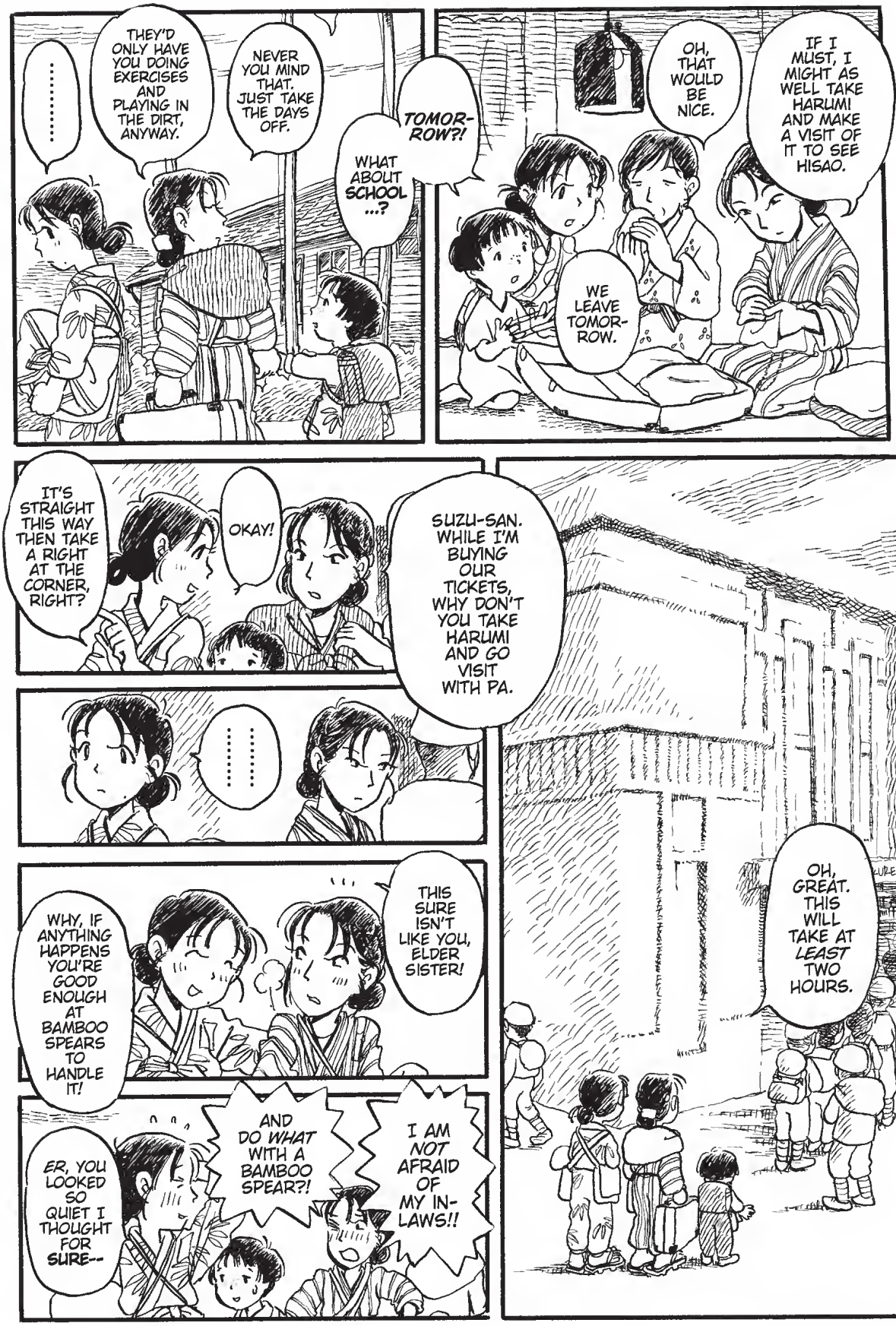
SHUSAKU, WAIT. WE'LL WALK WITH YOU A WAYS.
YOUR UNIFORM LOOKS AWFUL SHARP.
I'M NOT SMALL AT ALL.
IT FEELS LIKE THE HOUSE HAS SUDDENLY GOTTEN BIGGER, DOESN'T IT?
IT'S SHUSAKU-SAN WHO'S WAY TOO BIG.

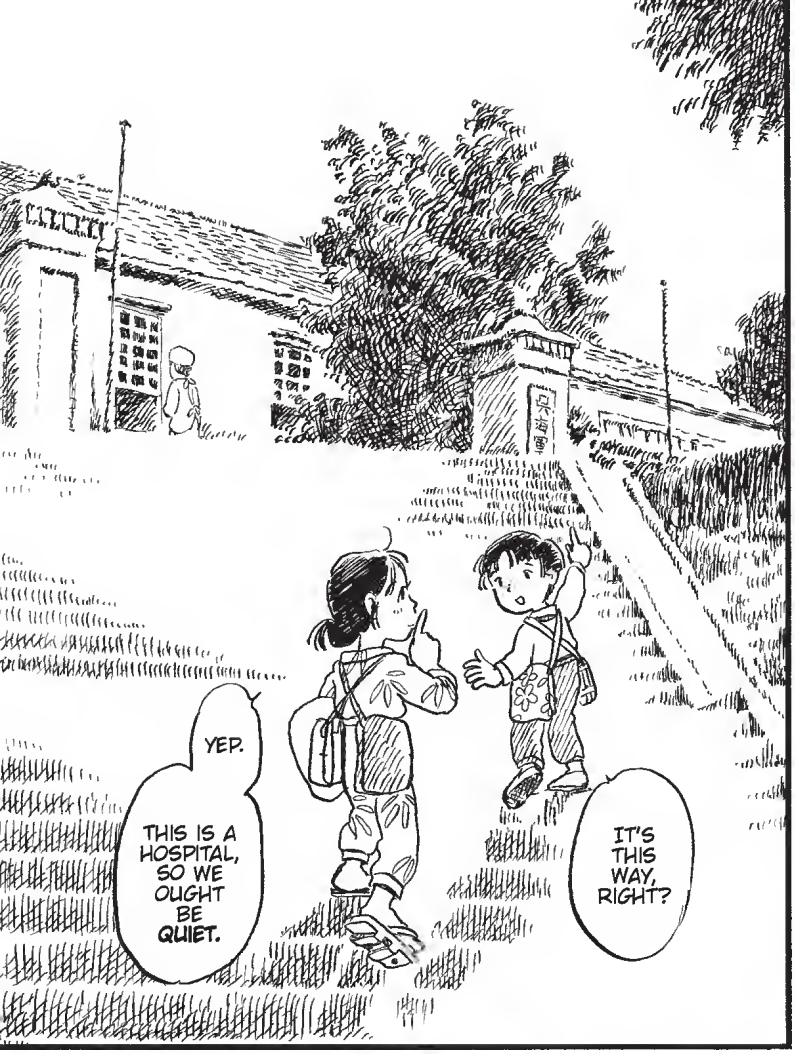




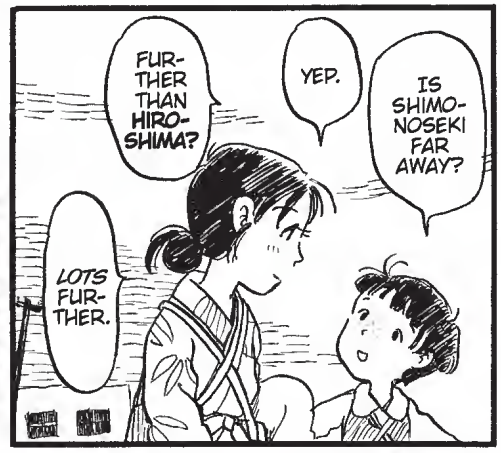
CHAPTER 32

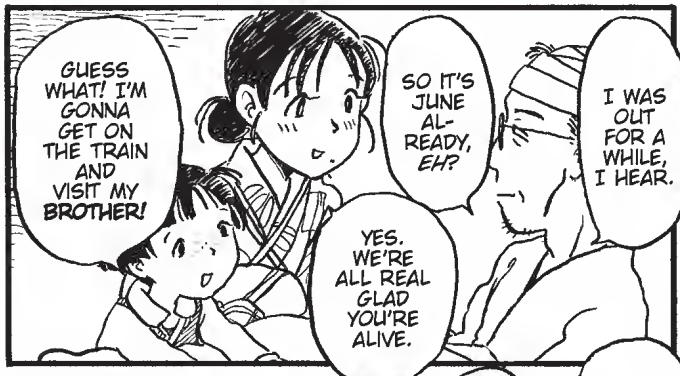
(June, 1945)

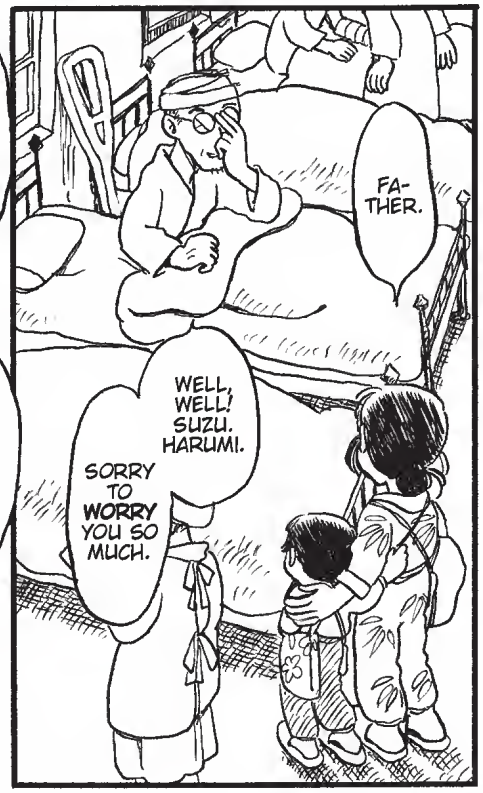

THEY'D ONLY HAVE YOU DOING EXERCISES AND PLAYING IN THE DIRT, ANYWAY.
NEVER YOU MIND THAT. JUST TAKE THE DAYS OFF.
.....
TOMOR-ROW?!
WHAT ABOUT SCHOOL ...?
OH, THAT WOULD BE NICE.
IF I MUST, I MIGHT AS WELL TAKE HARUMI AND MAKE A VISIT OF IT TO SEE HISAO.
WE LEAVE TOMOR-ROW.
IT'S STRAIGHT THIS WAY THEN TAKE A RIGHT AT THE CORNER, RIGHT?
OKAY!
SUZU-SAN. WHILE I'M BUYING OUR TICKETS, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE HARUMI AND GO VISIT WITH PA.
.....
OH, GREAT. THIS WILL TAKE AT LEAST TWO HOURS.
THIS SURE ISN'T LIKE YOU, ELDER SISTER!
WHY, IF ANYTHING HAPPENS YOU'RE GOOD ENOUGH AT BAMBOO SPEARS TO HANDLE IT!
I AM NOT AFRAID OF MY IN-LAWS!!
AND DO WHAT WITH A BAMBOO SPEAR?!
ER, YOU LOOKED SO QUIET I THOUGHT FOR SURE--

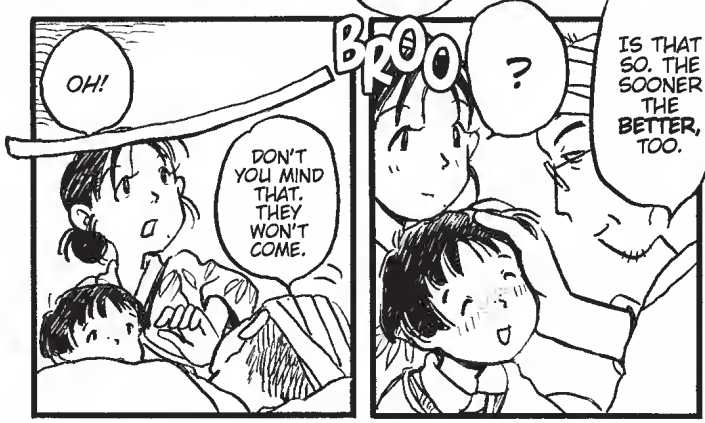


Sign. Kure Naval District Courts Martial



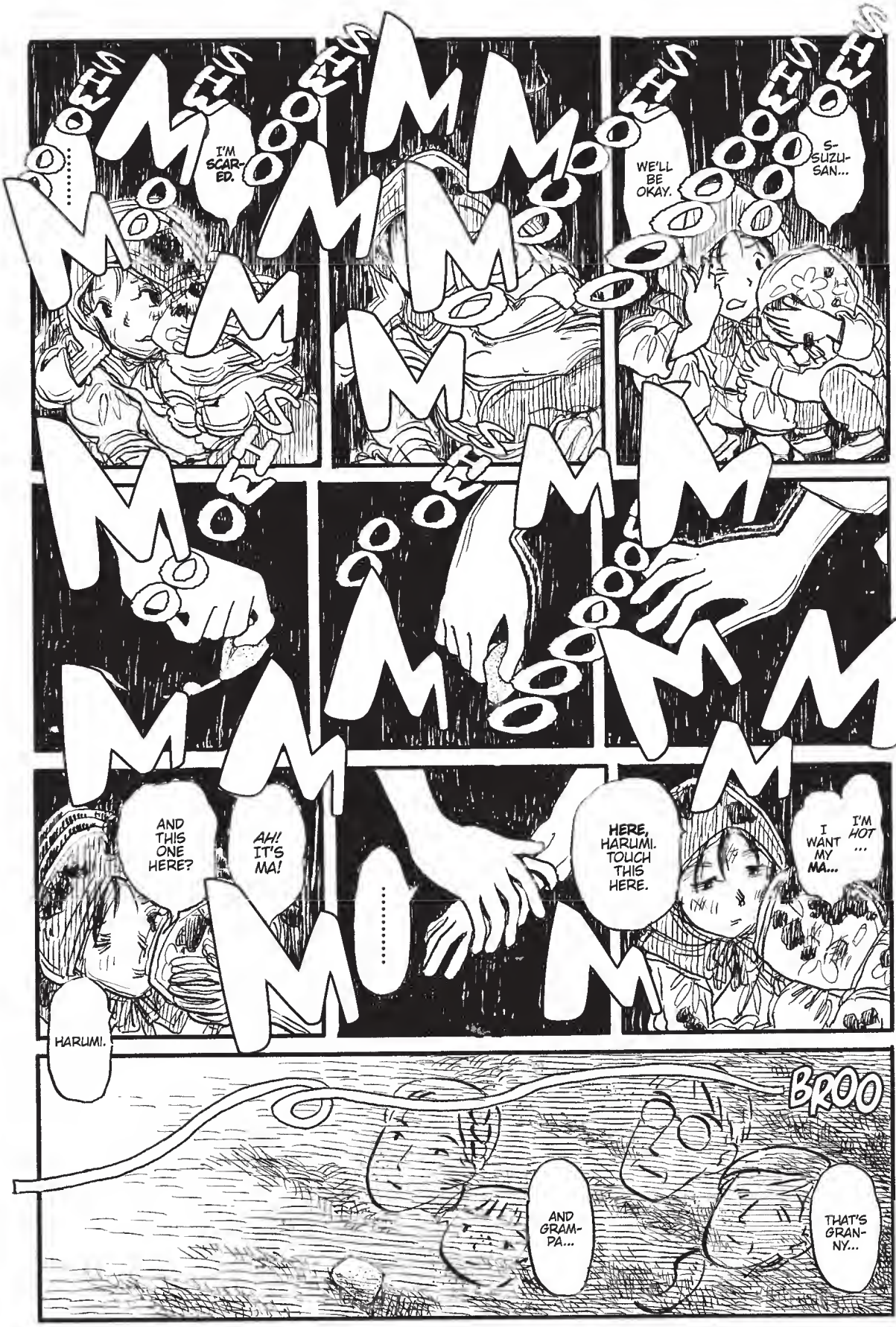


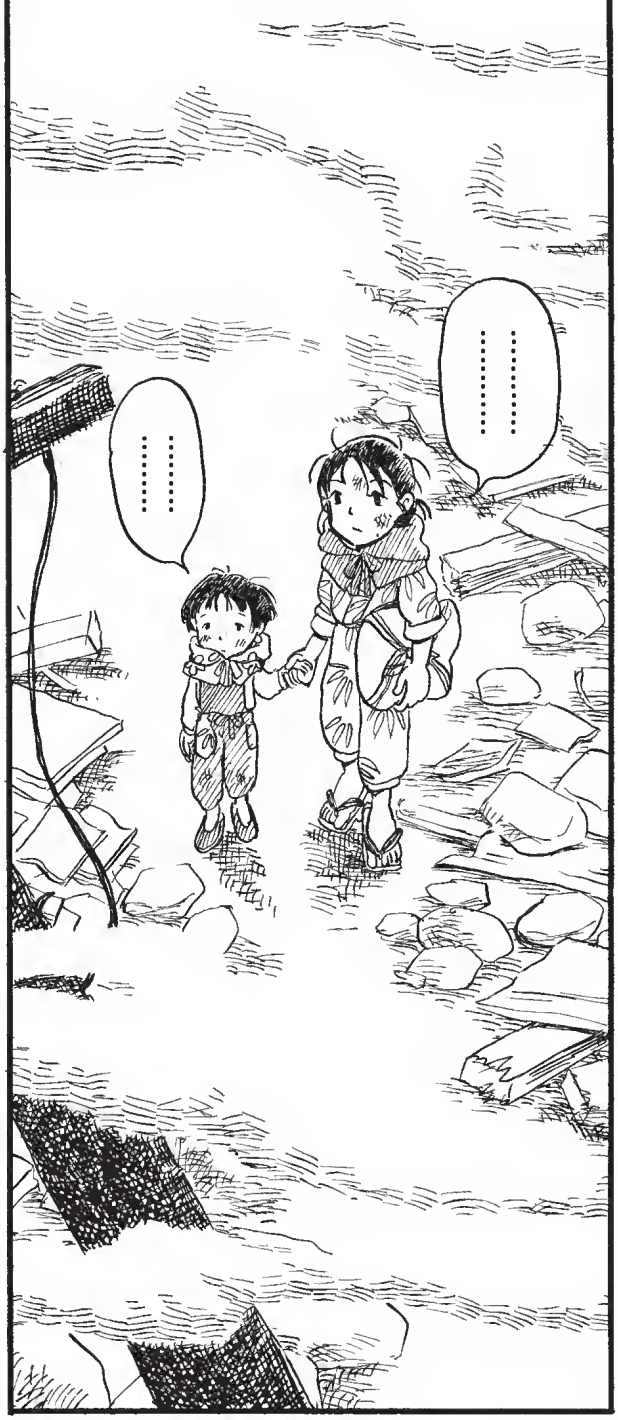


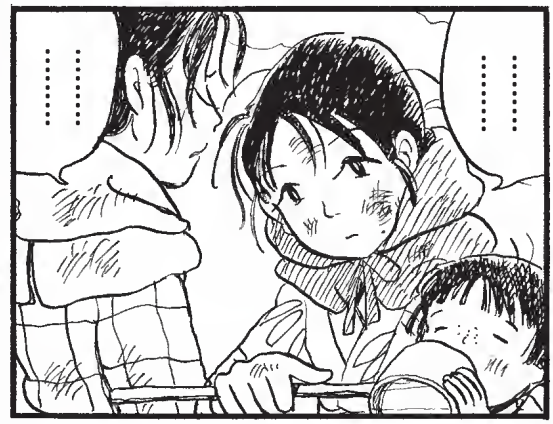


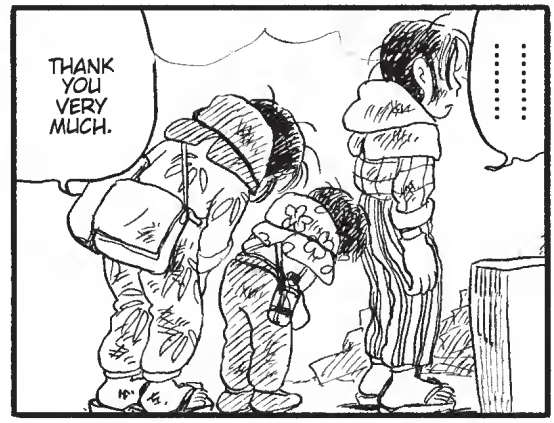
On April 7th, 1945, the Japanese Navy initiated Operation Ten-Go, a large-scale suicide attack on Allied forces in Okinawa. This engagement is also known as the Battle of the East China Sea. The *Yamato*, the flagship of the Japanese Navy fleet and widely held by many Japanese citizens of the time to be a symbol of the Japanese empire, was sunk by at least 11 torpedoes and 6 bombs. This news was not broken to the public until much, much later.

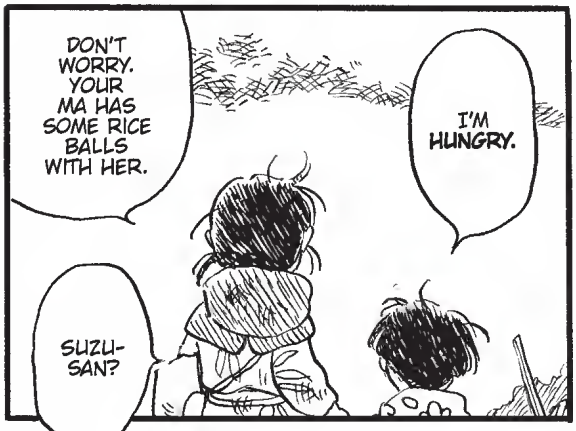
BOOM
BROO
BROO
BROO
UH-OH!
OF COURSE. HUSTLE, NOW.
EXCUSE ME. CAN WE COME IN, TOO?
OH, GREAT. THEY REALLY ARE COMIN' THIS TIME.
WATE
SIZZ
BWA
YOU AREN'T FROM AROUND HERE.
NO, MA'AM. WE'RE FROM KAMINAGANOKI, VISITING FAMILY IN THE HOSPITAL.
I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT.
HERE THEY COME!
COVER YOUR EARS AND OPEN YOUR MOUTH, ELSE YOUR EYES WILL POP RIGHT OUT!!


MOOO



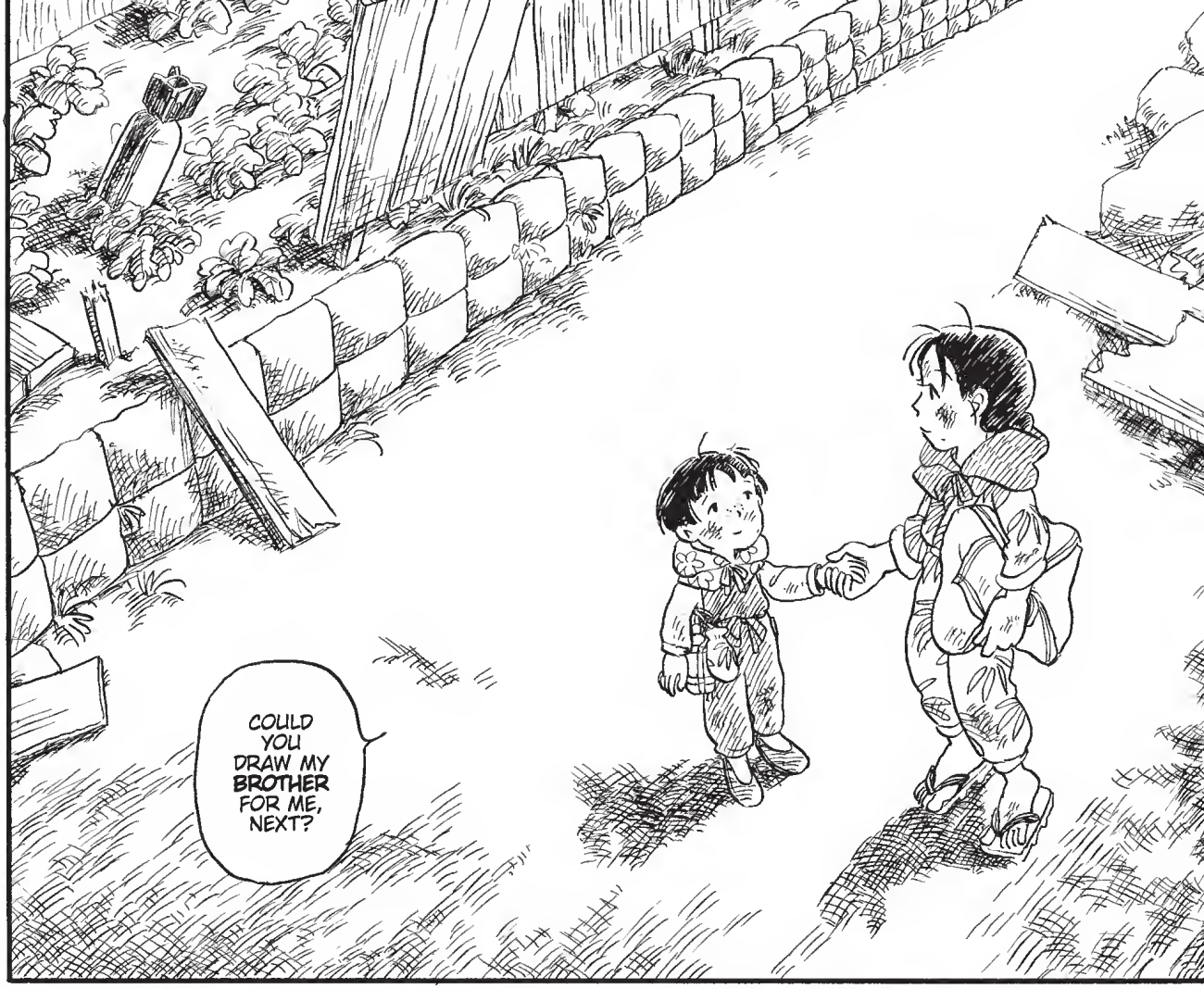


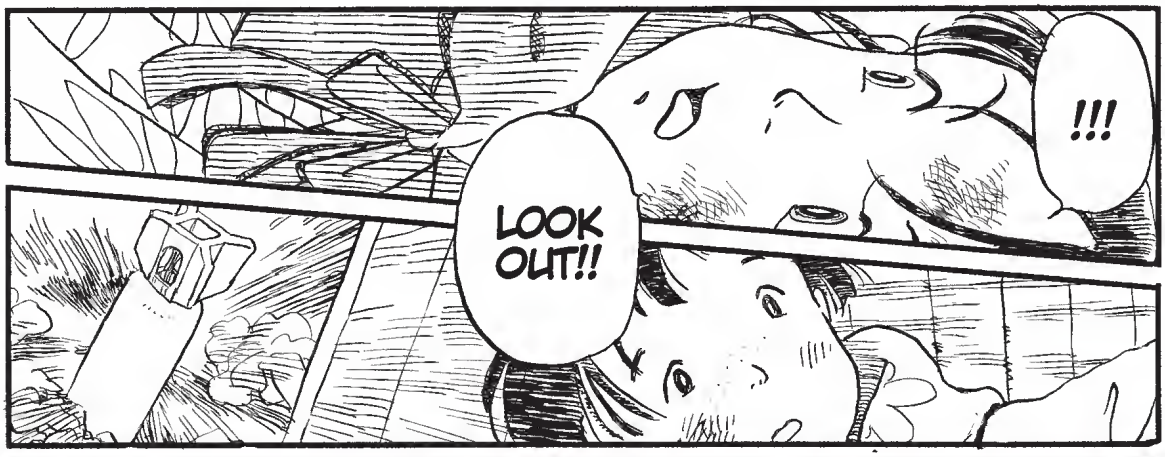




60

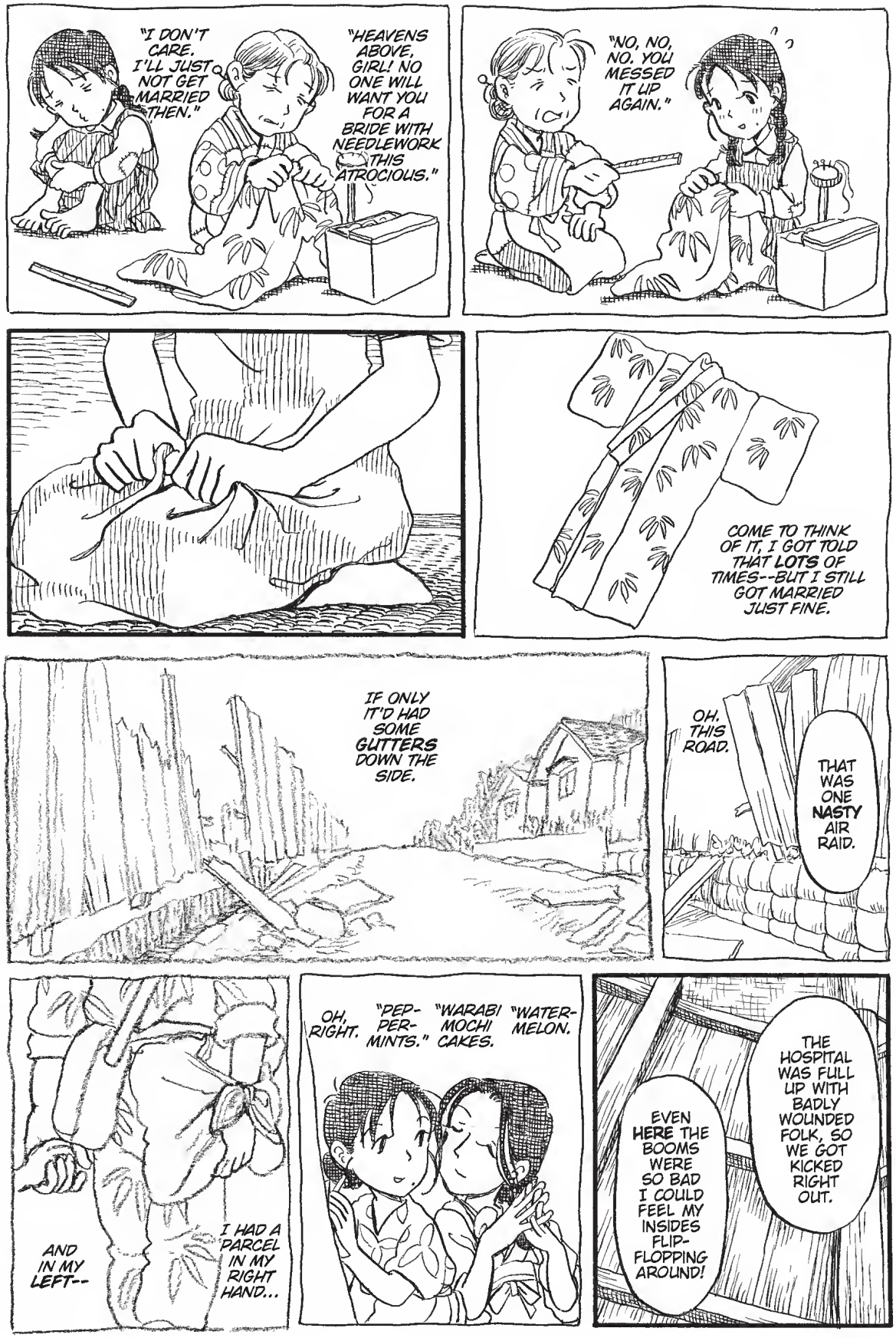
On June 22nd, 1945, from 9:20 A.M. to about noon, approximately 180 Boeing B-29 Superfortresses carried out an extensive attack on the Kure Naval Arsenal. The majority of the installation was destroyed, with only the shipyards emerging mostly intact. 325 arsenal personnel were killed, while 70 civilians were reported dead or missing.


COULD YOU DRAW MY BROTHER FOR ME, NEXT?

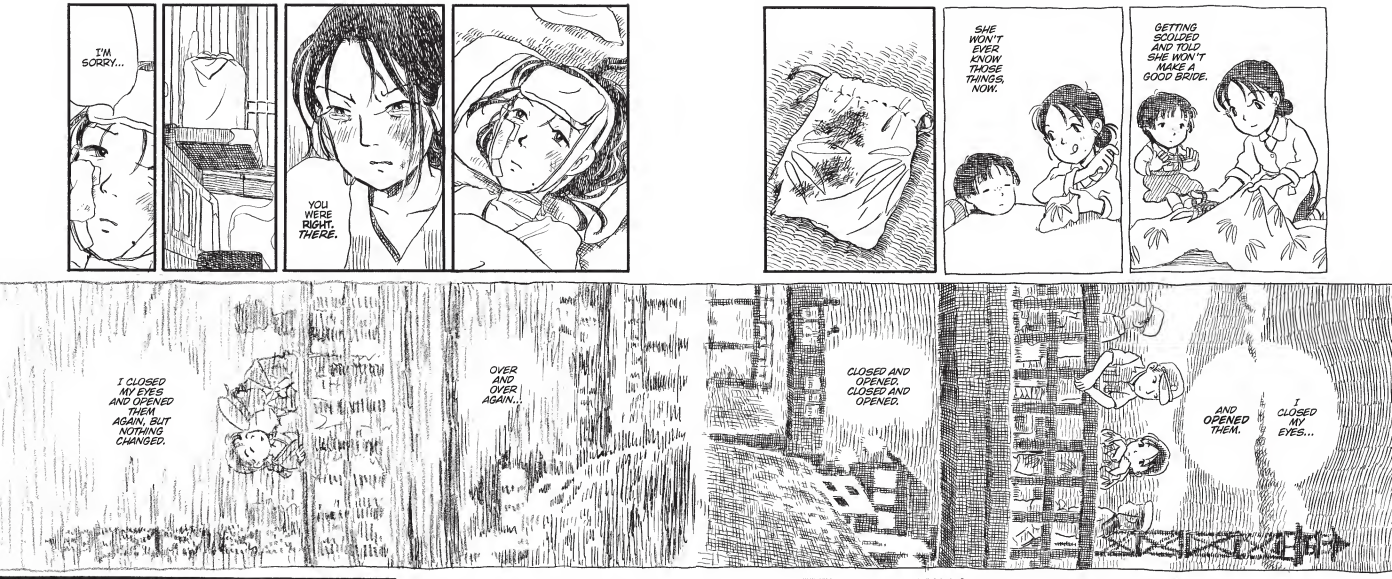

LOOK OUT!!
!!!

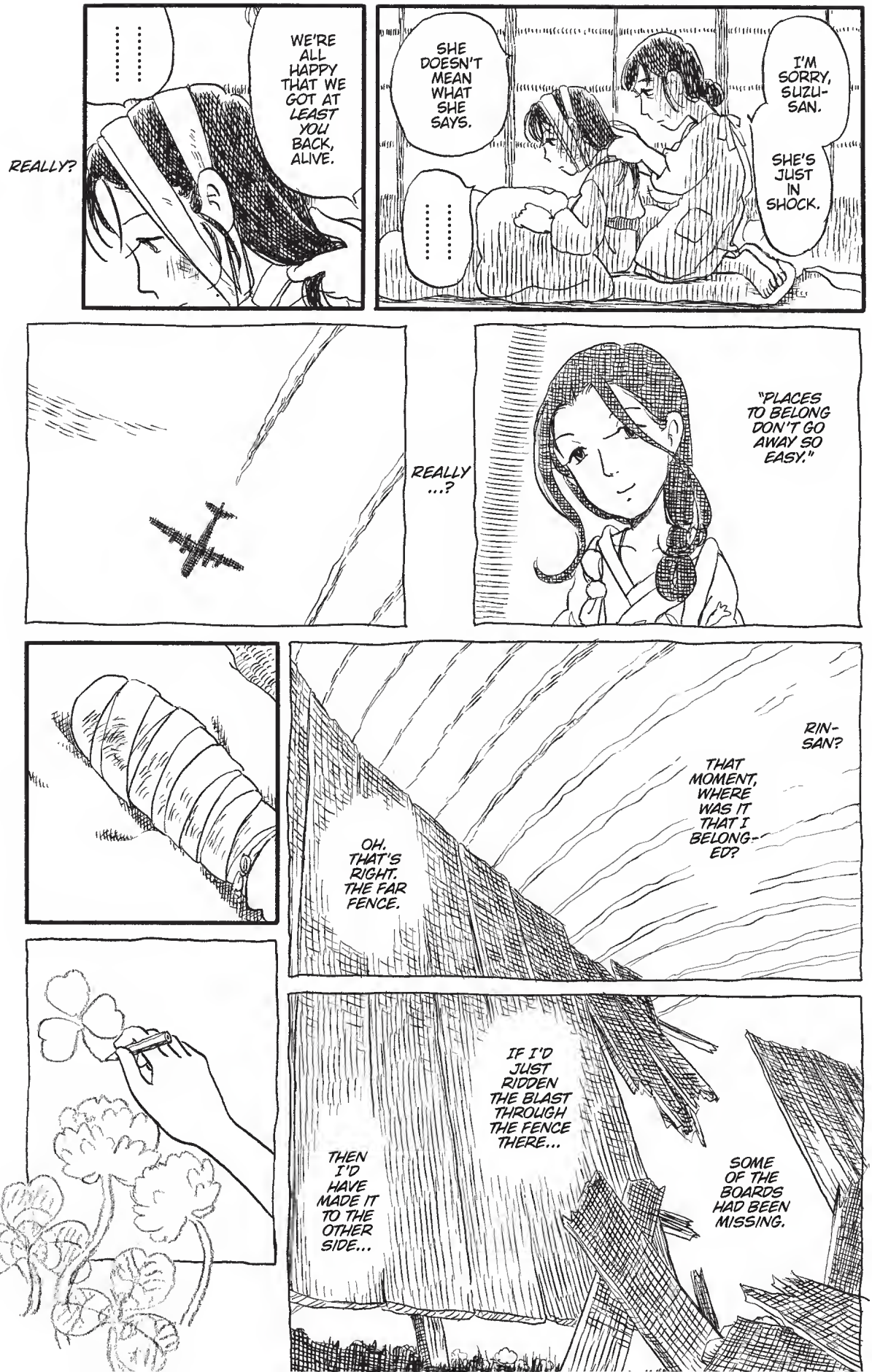
CHAPTER 33
(June, 1945)

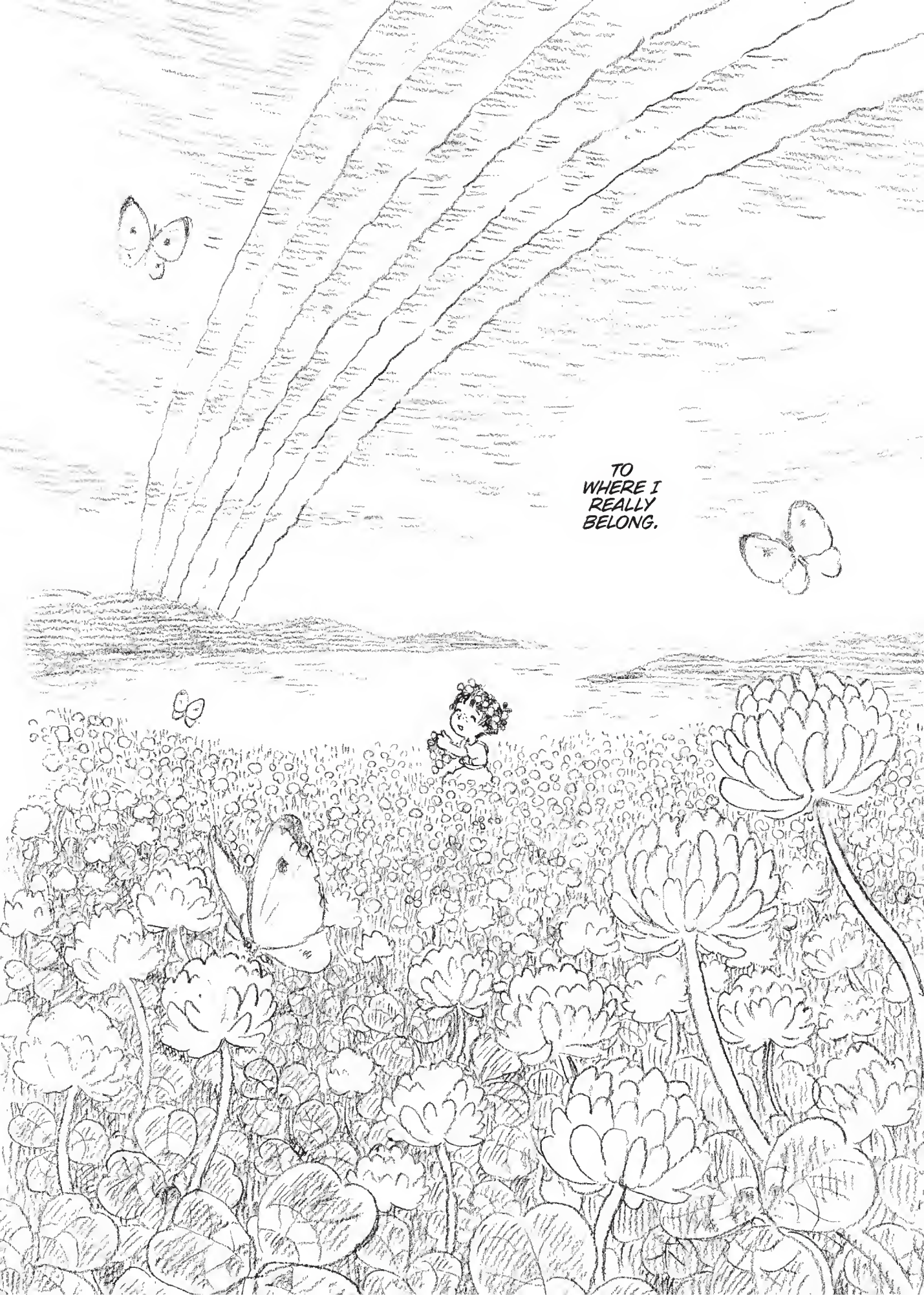
Delay-Action Bombs were aerial bombs designed to explode anywhere from a few minutes to several days after impact. Bombs of this type may have been used in the attack on Kure

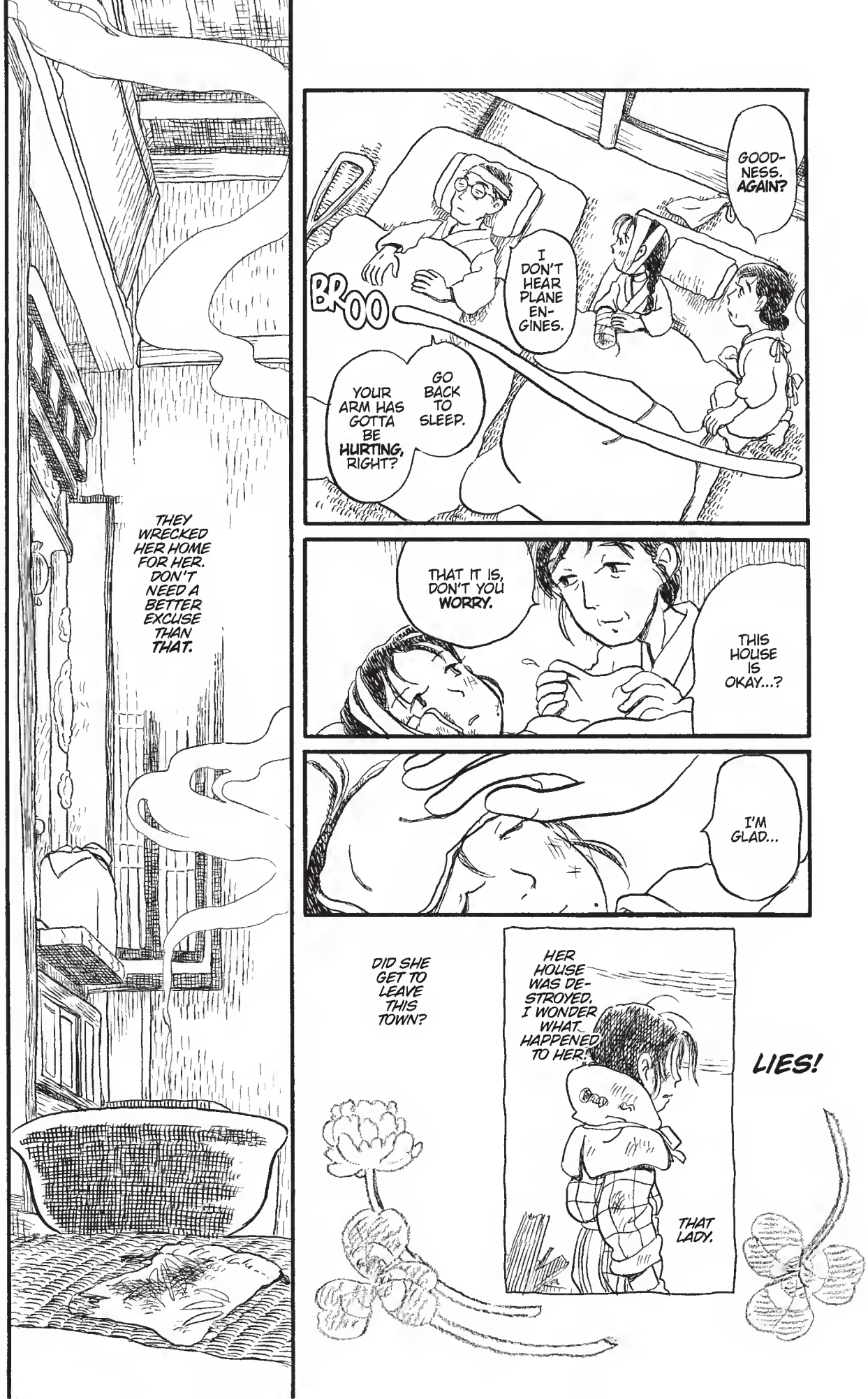

"I DON'T CARE. I'LL JUST NOT GET MARRIED THEN."
"HEAVENS ABOVE, GIRL! NO ONE WILL WANT YOU FOR A BRIDE WITH NEEDLEWORK THIS ATROCIOUS."
"NO, NO, NO. YOU MESSED IT UP AGAIN."
COME TO THINK OF IT, I GOT TOLD THAT **LOTS** OF TIMES--BUT I STILL GOT MARRIED JUST FINE.
IF ONLY IT'D HAD SOME **GUTTERS** DOWN THE SIDE.
OH. THIS ROAD.
THAT WAS ONE **NASTY** AIR RAID.
AND IN MY **LEFT**--
I HAD A PARCEL IN MY RIGHT HAND...
OH, RIGHT.
"PEP-PER-MINTS."
"WARABI MOCHI CAKES."
"WATER-MELON."
EVEN **HERE** THE BOOMS WERE SO BAD I COULD FEEL MY INSIDES FLIP-FLOPPING AROUND!
THE HOSPITAL WAS FULL UP WITH BADLY WOUNDED FOLK, SO WE GOT KICKED RIGHT OUT.

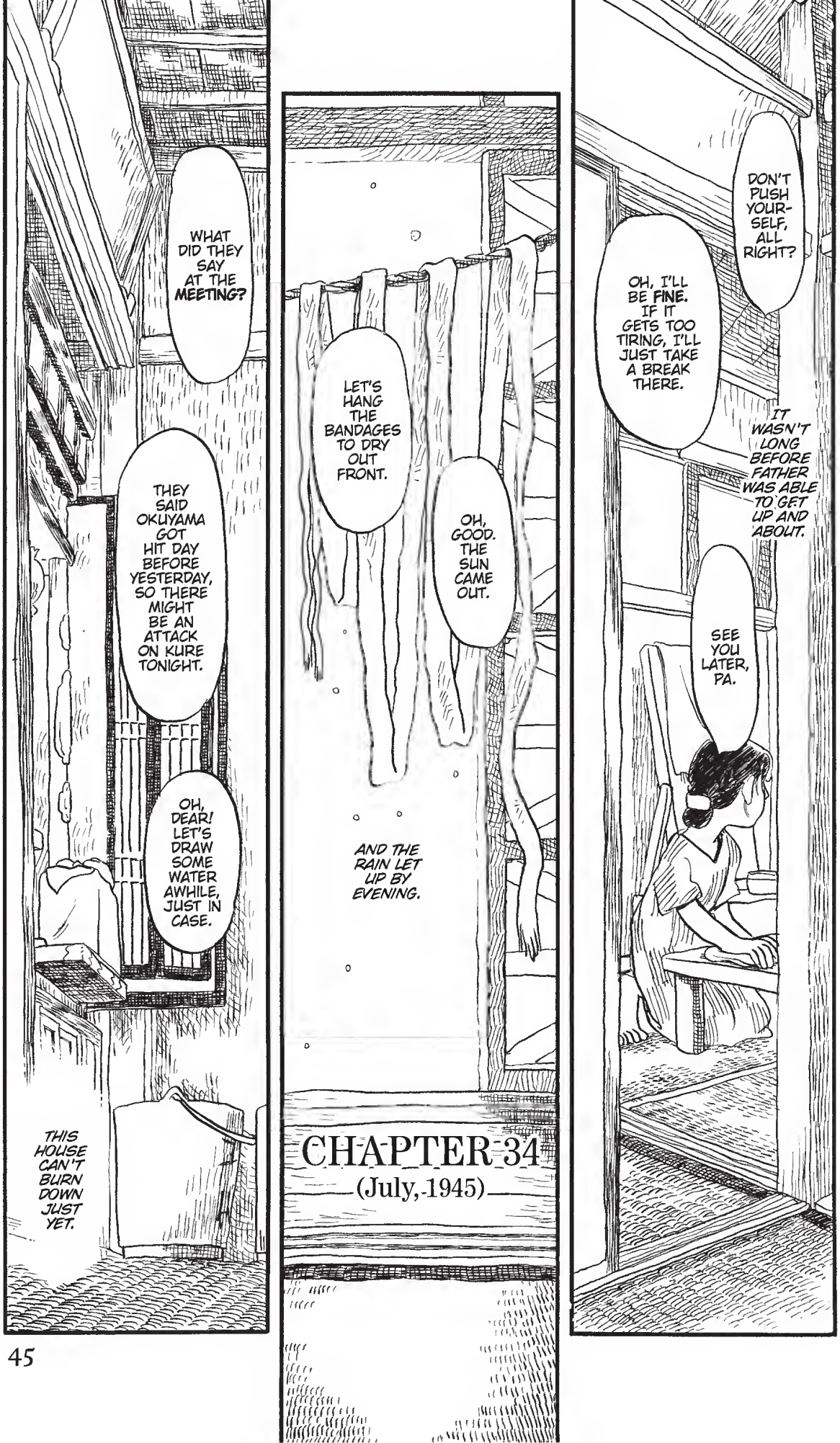
IF I'D KICKED OFF MY CLOGS AND RUN, COULD I HAVE MADE IT BEYOND THE HILL-TOP?
WHAT WAS BEYOND THAT HILL?
"MA, LOOK! IT'S THE YAMATO!"
"IF YOU'RE ON THE AOBA, THAT'S A HEAVY CRUISER!
"AND THAT'S THE HYUGA.
"THAT'S THE TONE.
"ICE CREAM AND PEPPER-MINTS."
SHE'S AN AWFUL LOT LIKE SHUSAKU-SAN.
.....
.....
YOU KNOW, THINKING ABOUT IT...

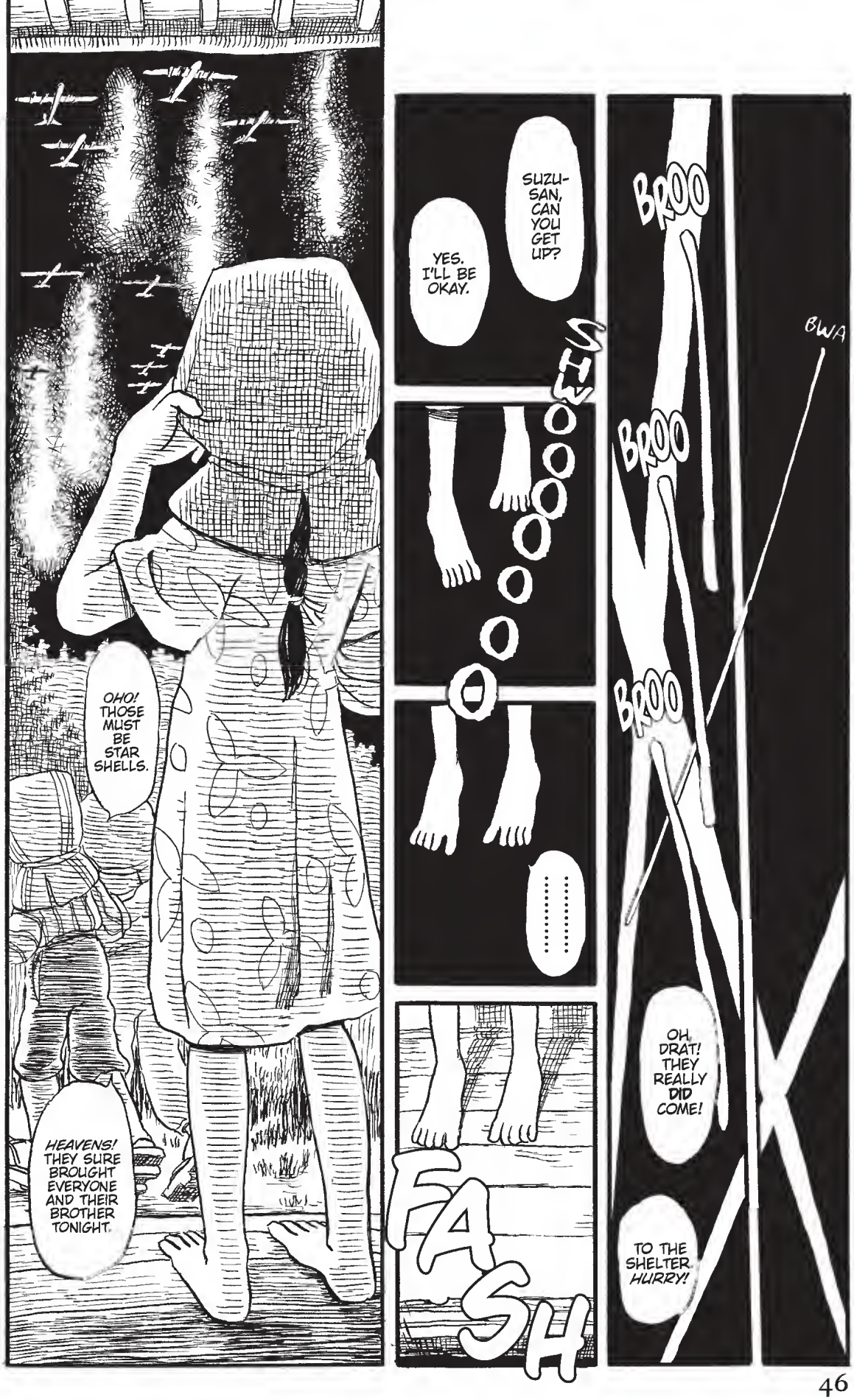

I'M SORRY...
YOU WERE RIGHT. THERE.
SHE WON'T EVER KNOW THOSE THINGS, NOW.
GETTING SCOLDED AND TOLD SHE WON'T MAKE A GOOD BRIDE.
I CLOSED MY EYES AND OPENED THEM AGAIN, BUT NOTHING CHANGED.
OVER AND OVER AGAIN...
CLOSED AND OPENED. CLOSED AND OPENED.
AND OPENED THEM.
I CLOSED MY EYES...
COME, KEIKO. IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR THE TOFU DISTRIBUTION.
KEIKO, STOP.
GIVE HARUMI BACK !!!
GIVE HER BACK !!
YOU KILLED HER!
YOU MURDERER...
THEY CAREFULLY BRUSHED HER OFF... COLLECTED HER... BUT I WON'T EVER REACH HER AGAIN.
MUIRD ...
I STRETCHED OUT MY HAND, BUT JUST BEYOND IT... THERE WAS A FLASH...
MY VOICE COULDN'T REACH.
I'M SORRY, ELDER SISTER.
I'M SORRY, HARUMI-SAN.
WHERE DID I GO WRONG?

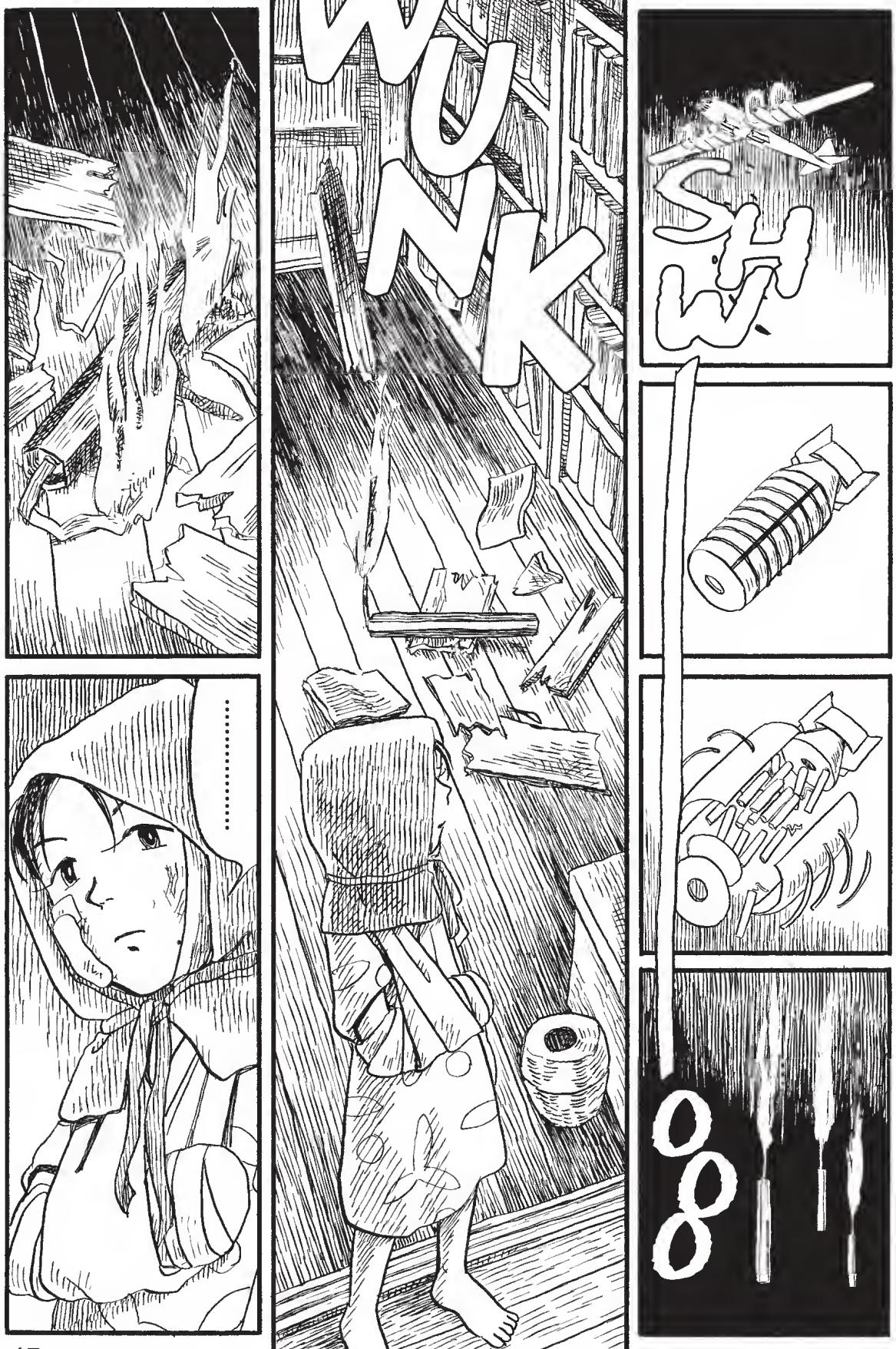

REALLY?
.....
WE'RE ALL HAPPY THAT WE GOT AT LEAST YOU BACK, ALIVE.
SHE DOESN'T MEAN WHAT SHE SAYS.
.....
I'M SORRY, SUZU-SAN.
SHE'S JUST IN SHOCK.
REALLY ...?
"PLACES TO BELONG DON'T GO AWAY SO EASY."
RIN-SAN?
THAT MOMENT, WHERE WAS IT THAT I BELONG-ED?
OH. THAT'S RIGHT. THE FAR FENCE.
IF I'D JUST RIDDEN THE BLAST THROUGH THE FENCE THERE...
THEN I'D HAVE MADE IT TO THE OTHER SIDE...
SOME OF THE BOARDS HAD BEEN MISSING.

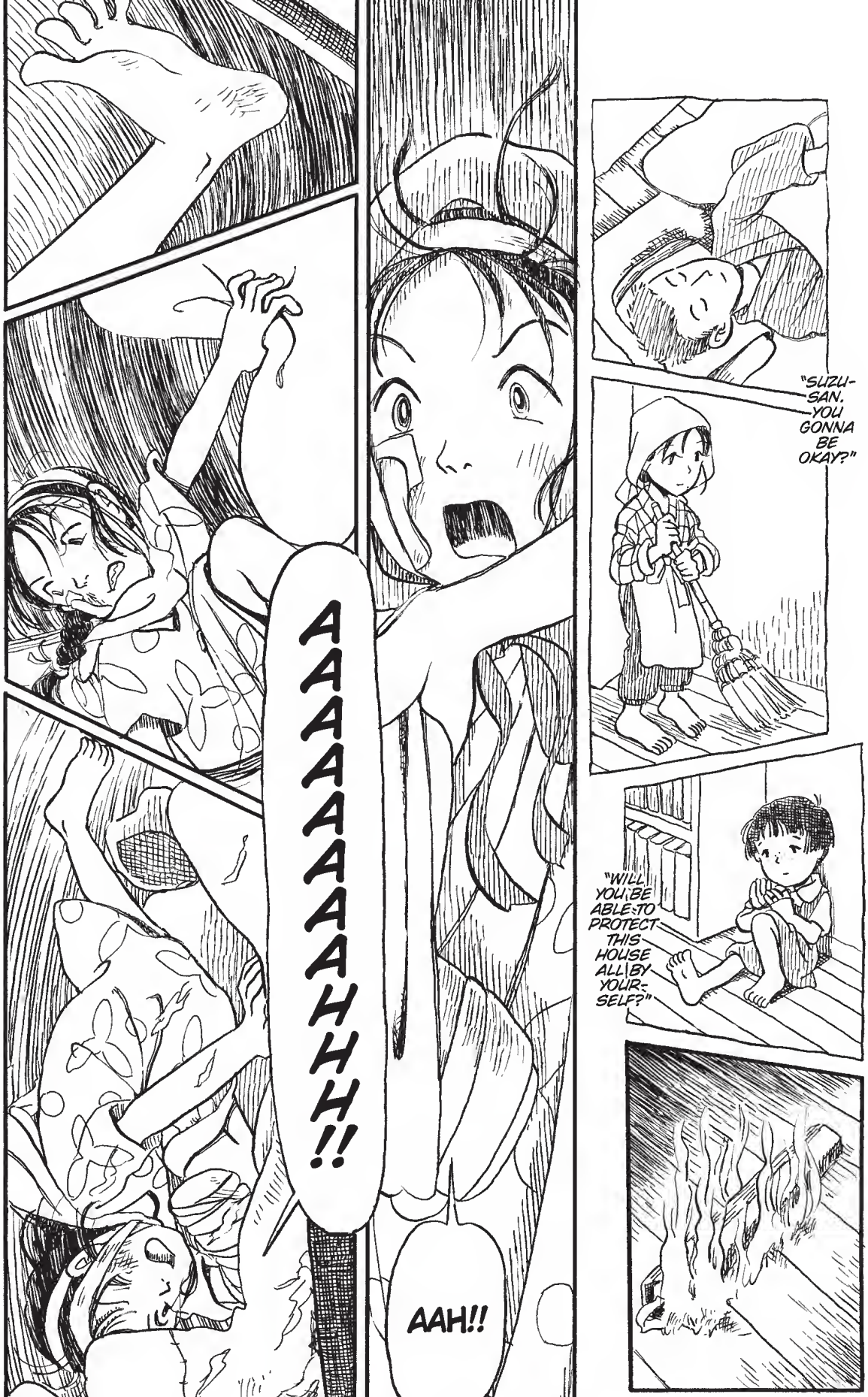

TO
WHERE I
REALLY
BELONG.


GOOD-NESS. AGAIN?
I DON'T HEAR PLANE EN-GINES.
BROO
GO BACK TO SLEEP.
YOUR ARM HAS GOTTA BE HURTING, RIGHT?
THIS HOUSE IS OKAY...?
THAT IT IS, DON'T YOU WORRY.
I'M GLAD...
THEY WRECKED HER HOME FOR HER. DON'T NEED A BETTER EXCUSE THAN THAT.
HER HOUSE WAS DE-STROYED. I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO HER.
THAT LADY.
DID SHE GET TO LEAVE THIS TOWN?
LIES!


DON'T PUSH YOURSELF, ALL RIGHT?
OH, I'LL BE FINE. IF IT GETS TOO TIRING, I'LL JUST TAKE A BREAK THERE.
IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE FATHER WAS ABLE TO GET UP AND ABOUT.
SEE YOU LATER, PA.
LET'S HANG THE BANDAGES TO DRY OUT FRONT.
OH, GOOD. THE SUN CAME OUT.
AND THE RAIN LET UP BY EVENING.
CHAPTER 34
(July, 1945)
WHAT DID THEY SAY AT THE MEETING?
THEY SAID OKUYAMA GOT HIT DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY, SO THERE MIGHT BE AN ATTACK ON KURE TONIGHT.
OH, DEAR! LET'S DRAW SOME WATER AWHILE, JUST IN CASE.
THIS HOUSE CAN'T BURN DOWN JUST YET.


HEAVENS! THEY SURE BROUGHT EVERYONE AND THEIR BROTHER TONIGHT.
OHO! THOSE MUST BE STAR SHELLS.
FA
SH
SUZU-SAN, CAN YOU GET UP?
YES. I'LL BE OKAY.
SHUU
BROO
BROO
BROO
BWA
OH, DRAT! THEY REALLY DID COME!
TO THE SHELTER, HURRY!

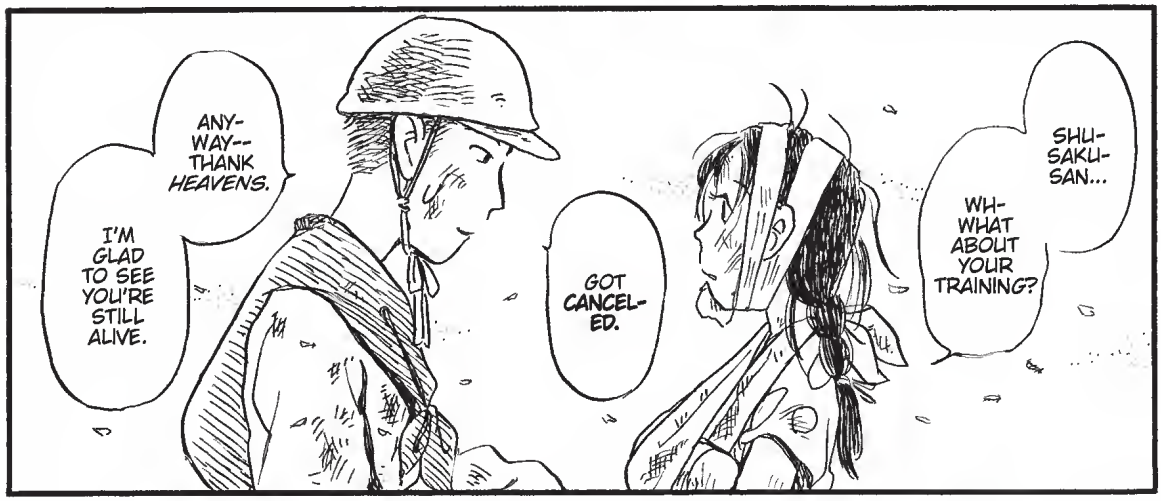

SHW
WUNK
.....


"SUZU-SAN. YOU GONNA BE OKAY?"
"WILL YOU BE ABLE TO PROTECT THIS HOUSE ALL BY YOURSELF?"
AAAAAAAAHHH!!
AAH!!

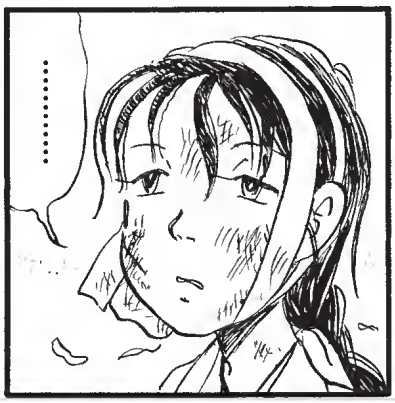
DID ONE LAND ?!
IT'S AN INCEN-DIARY! BRING WATER !!
THERE. IT'S DIED DOWN.
LET'S CARRY IT OUT. EASY NOW...
.....

From 11:50 P.M. July 1st to about 2:30 A.M. July 2nd, 1945, upwards of 80 B-29 Superfortresses conducted an attack on Kure. A carpet bombing attack, its target was the city of Kure itself. The bombardment consisted mainly of incendiary bombs and much of the city was turned into a sea of flames. 122,535 civilian casualties were recorded, 1,817 of whom were killed.

LOOKIT.
EVERY-THING'S BURNT FLAT AS FAR AS I CAN SEE.
.....
ANYONE FROM MYOJIN TOWN HERE? ANYONE?
EXCUSE ME.
GO RIGHT AHEAD, SIR.
SORRY, BUT MIND IF I USE THESE BAN-DAGES?
ELDER SIS-TER...
THE POTATOES I HAD STORED UNDER THE FLOOR TOASTED UP REAL NICELY.
OH, WHY THANK YOU.
HERE. EAT UP WHILE THEY'RE WARM.
ARE YOU HURT?
THAT WAS ONE HUGE ATTACK!
SUZU-SAN!
.....
I'M LOOKING FOR ANY SURVI-VORS FROM MYOJIN TOWN!


SHU-SAKU-SAN...
WH-WHAT ABOUT YOUR TRAINING?
GOT CANCEL-ED.
ANY-WAY-- THANK HEAVENS.
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE STILL ALIVE.

SUZU-SAN?!
WAH! YOU'RE BURNIN' UP!
?!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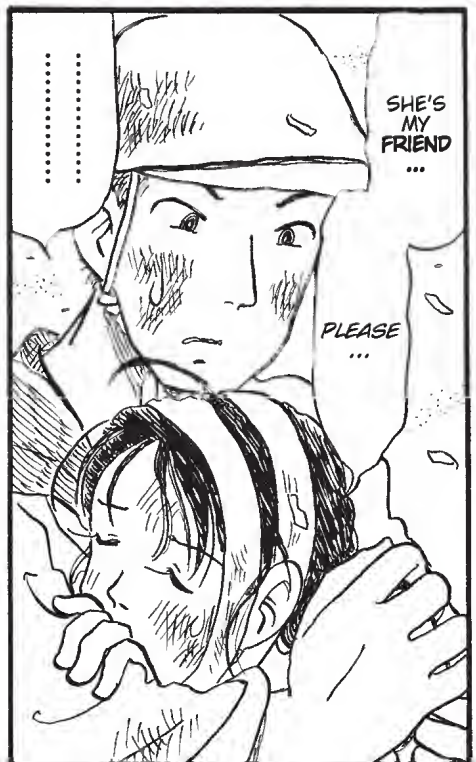
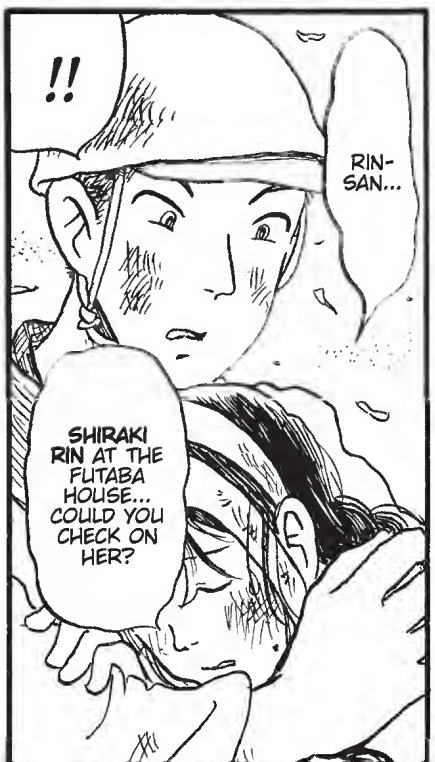
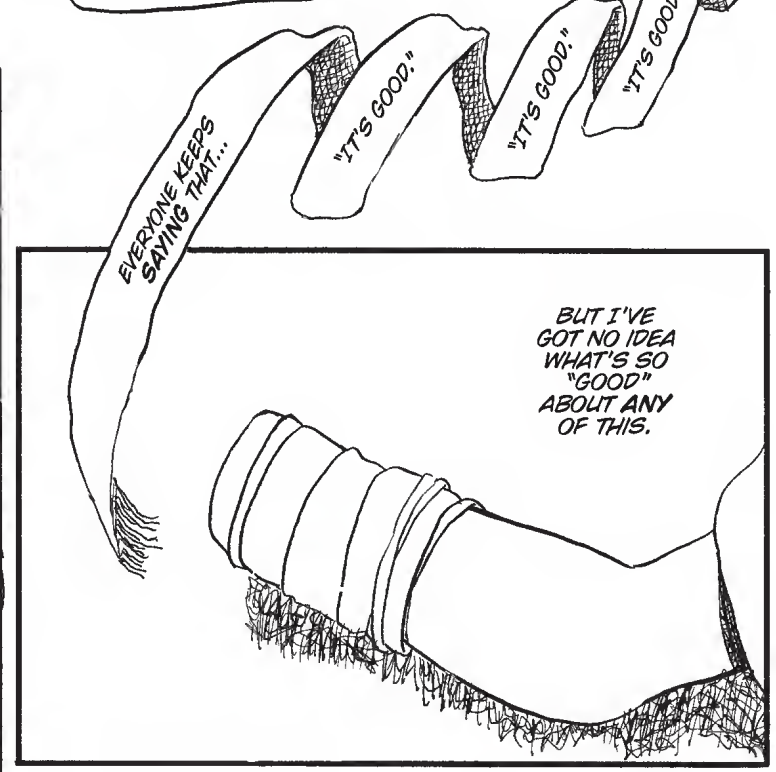
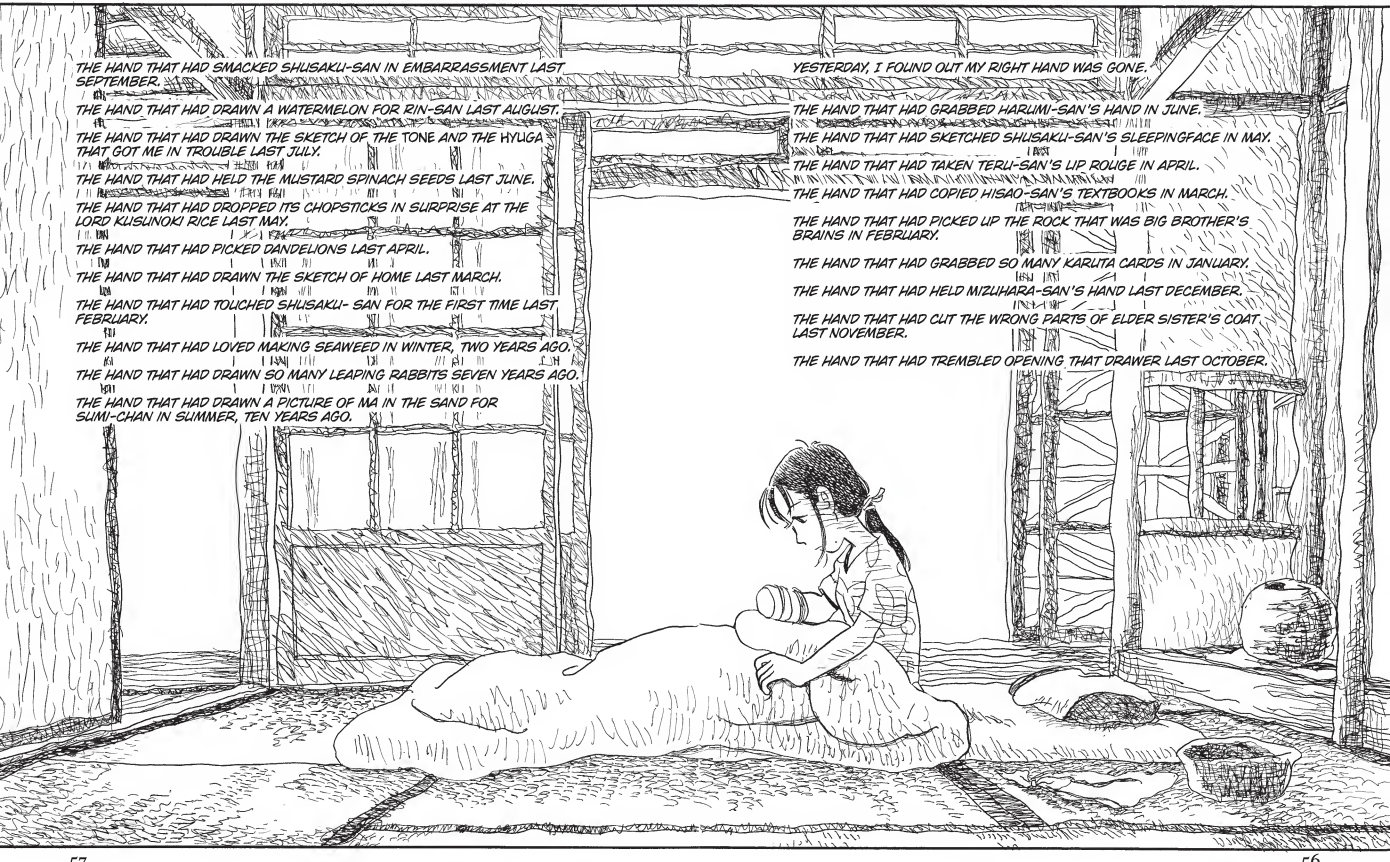

.....
SHE'S MY FRIEND ...
PLEASE ...

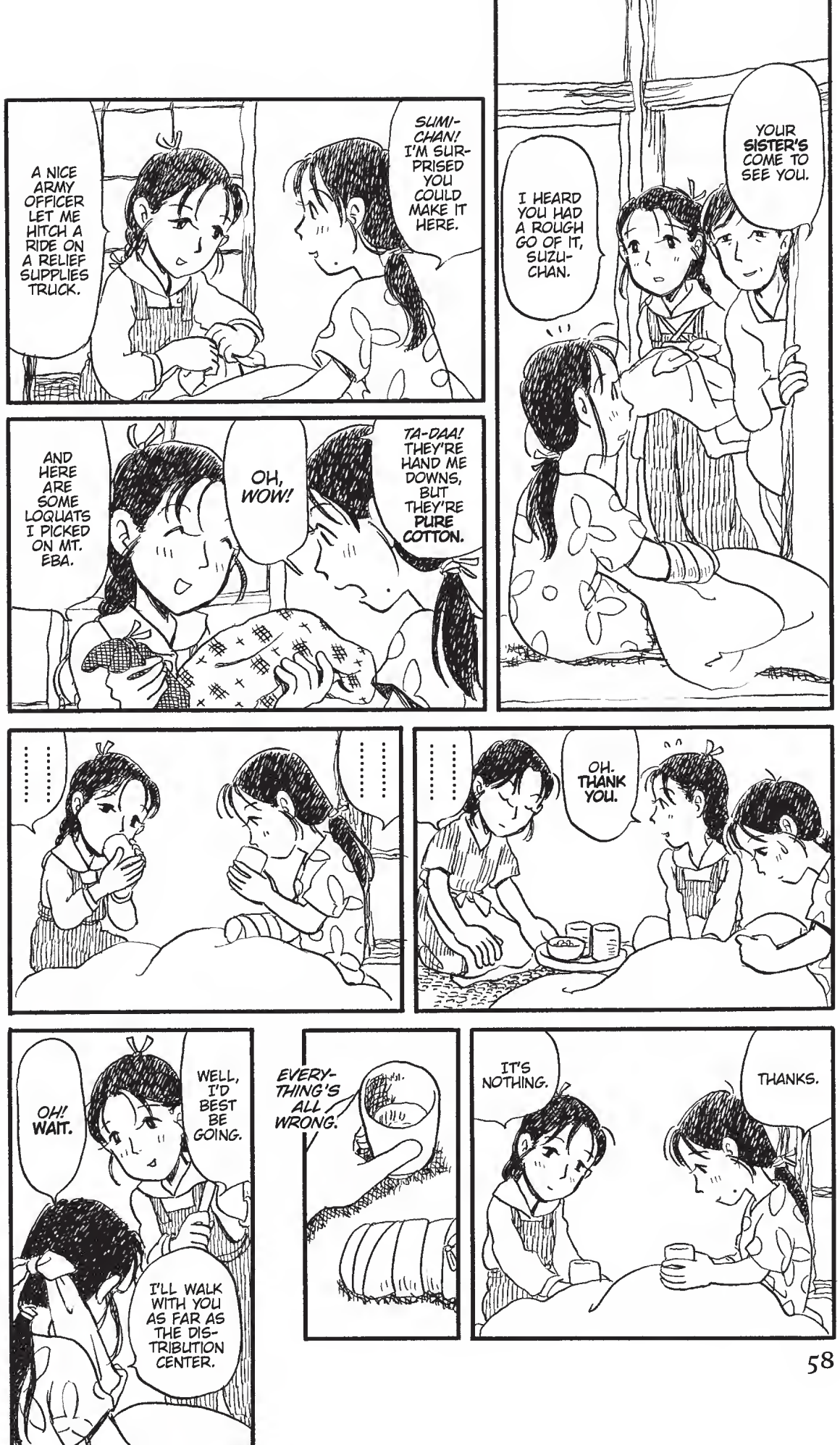

!!
RIN-SAN...
SHIRAKI RIN AT THE FUTABA HOUSE... COULD YOU CHECK ON HER?

SHU-SAKU-SAN...
COULD I ASK YOU SOME-THING?

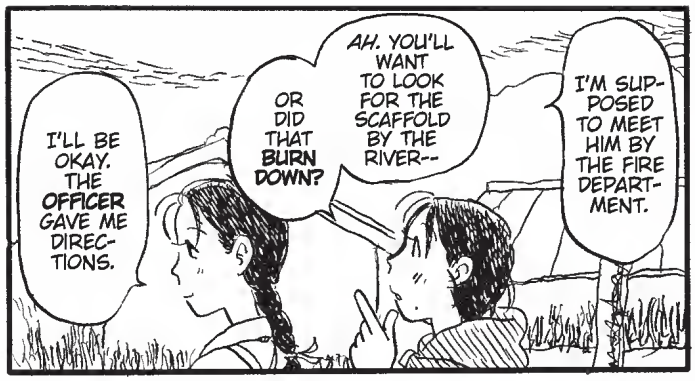
CHAPTER 35
(July, 1945)

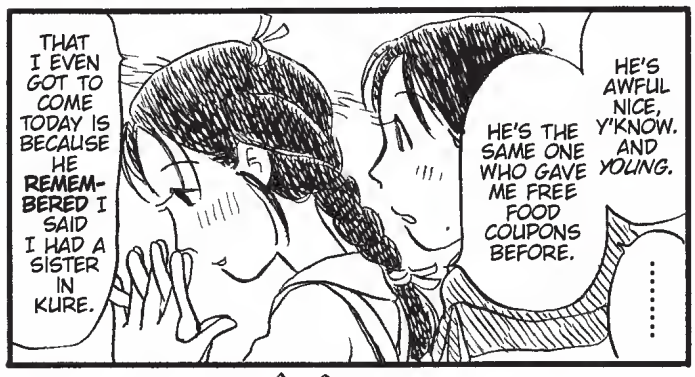


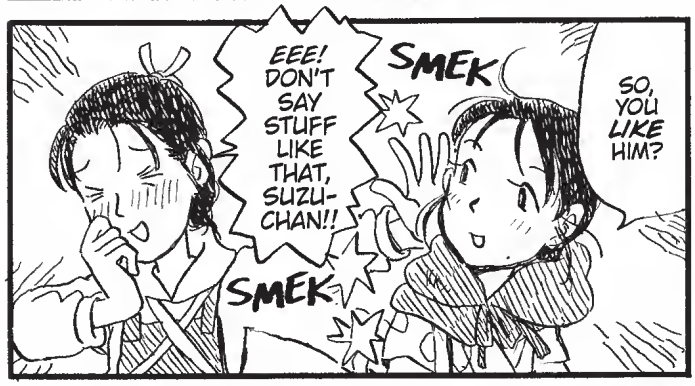

YESTERDAY, I FOUND OUT MY RIGHT HAND WAS GONE.
THE HAND THAT HAD GRABBED HARUMI-SAN'S HAND IN JUNE.
THE HAND THAT HAD SKETCHED SHUSAKU-SAN'S SLEEPINGFACE IN MAY.
THE HAND THAT HAD TAKEN TERU-SAN'S LIP ROUGE IN APRIL.
THE HAND THAT HAD COPIED HISAO-SAN'S TEXTBOOKS IN MARCH.
THE HAND THAT HAD PICKED UP THE ROCK THAT WAS BIG BROTHER'S BRAINS IN FEBRUARY.
THE HAND THAT HAD GRABBED SO MANY KARUTA CARDS IN JANUARY.
THE HAND THAT HAD HELD MIZUHARA-SAN'S HAND LAST DECEMBER.
THE HAND THAT HAD CUT THE WRONG PARTS OF ELDER SISTER'S COAT LAST NOVEMBER.
THE HAND THAT HAD TREMBLED OPENING THAT DRAWER LAST OCTOBER.
THE HAND THAT HAD SMACKED SHUSAKU-SAN IN EMBARRASSMENT LAST SEPTEMBER.
THE HAND THAT HAD DRAWN A WATERMELON FOR RIN-SAN LAST AUGUST.
THE HAND THAT HAD DRAWN THE SKETCH OF THE TONE AND THE HYUGA THAT GOT ME IN TROUBLE LAST JULY.
THE HAND THAT HAD HELD THE MUSTARD SPINACH SEEDS LAST JUNE.
THE HAND THAT HAD DROPPED ITS CHOPSTICKS IN SURPRISE AT THE LORD KUSUNOKI RICE LAST MAY.
THE HAND THAT HAD PICKED DANDELIONS LAST APRIL.
THE HAND THAT HAD DRAWN THE SKETCH OF HOME LAST MARCH.
THE HAND THAT HAD TOUCHED SHUSAKU- SAN FOR THE FIRST TIME LAST FEBRUARY.
THE HAND THAT HAD LOVED MAKING SEAWEED IN WINTER, TWO YEARS AGO.
THE HAND THAT HAD DRAWN SO MANY LEAPING RABBITS SEVEN YEARS AGO.
THE HAND THAT HAD DRAWN A PICTURE OF MA IN THE SAND FOR SUMI-CHAN IN SUMMER, TEN YEARS AGO.



Starting in 1938, the Japanese government mandated that all cotton yarns and fabrics be blended with the synthetic fiber rayon (called "sufu" in Japanese). The cheaply made rayon was poor quality and not very durable. Fabrics and clothes made with 100% natural cotton quickly became very valuable.





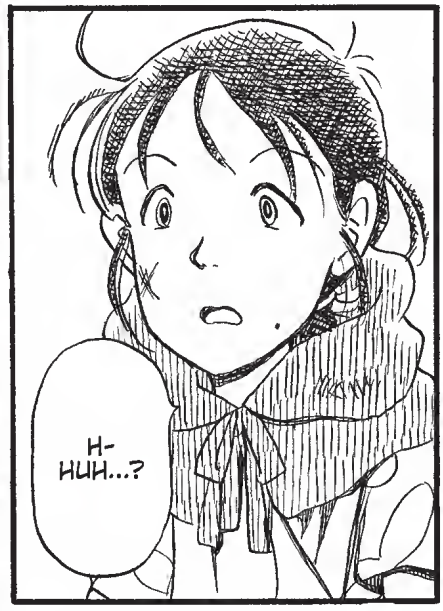


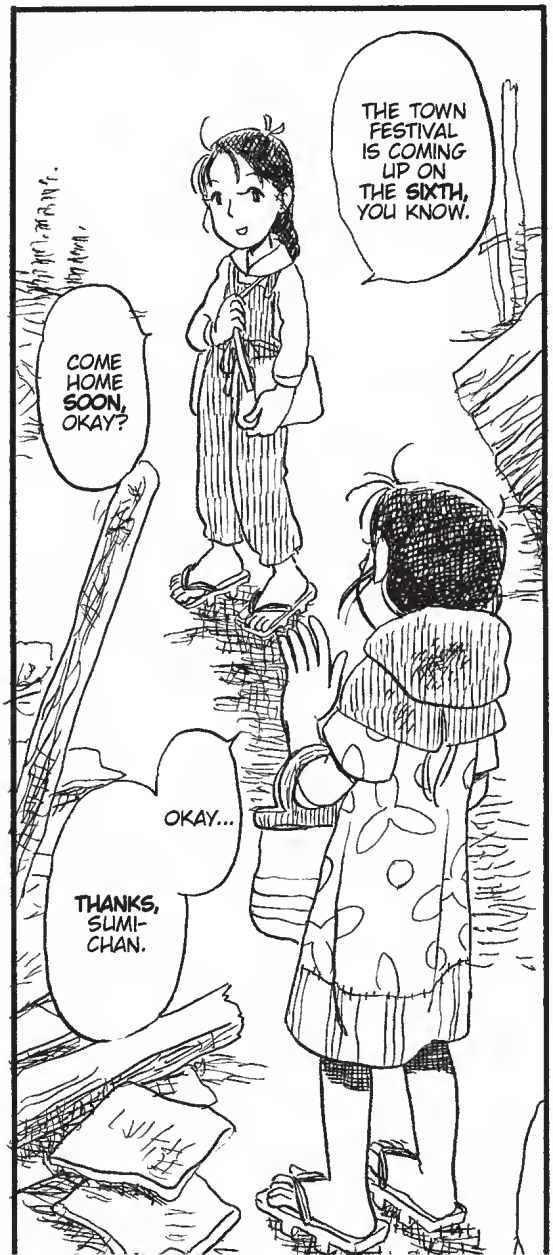
IF THEIR HOUSES BURNT DOWN, WHY NOT JUST LEAVE?

In the Japanese army, all officers (as opposed to enlisted men) had a rank of at least second lieutenant or higher.

COME BACK HOME. TO HIRO-SHIMA.
SUZU-CHAN.
AS WRONG AND AS WARPED AS A WORLD DRAWN WITH MY LEFT HAND.

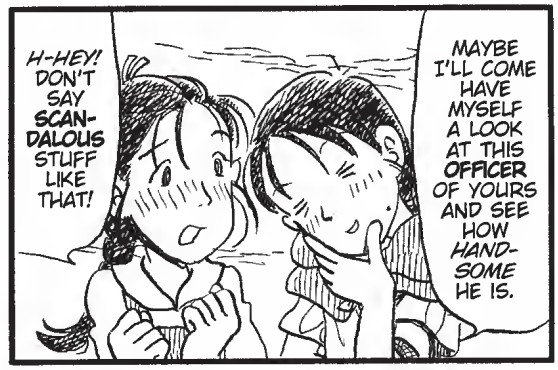
SOMEONE MUST'VE DIED HERE.
LOOK. THERE'S INCENSE.
I'VE WALKED BY FOLK LYING DEAD IN THE STREET WITHOUT EVEN BAT-TING AN EYE.
.....
WHY, THAT LAST ONE WAS SO BAD WE COULD SEE THE SKY GOING RED EVEN FROM HOME.
SUMI-CHAN IS ONLY A YEAR YOUNGER THAN ME, BUT...
IT'S SO SAD HOW KURE'S BEEN HIT WITH SO MANY AIR RAIDS.
I KNOW I'M THE ONE WHO'S ALL WRONG...
DOING YOUR DUTY FOR THE HOJO FAMILY HAS TO BE REAL HARD.
I KNOW.
SO, ER... WITH YOUR... YOUR HAND...

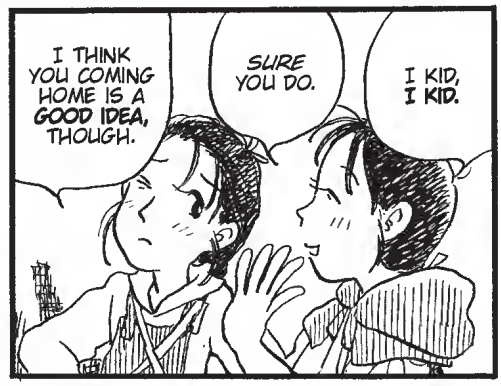




I AM GLAD THAT MY OLDER BROTHER IS DEAD.

I'M GLAD.

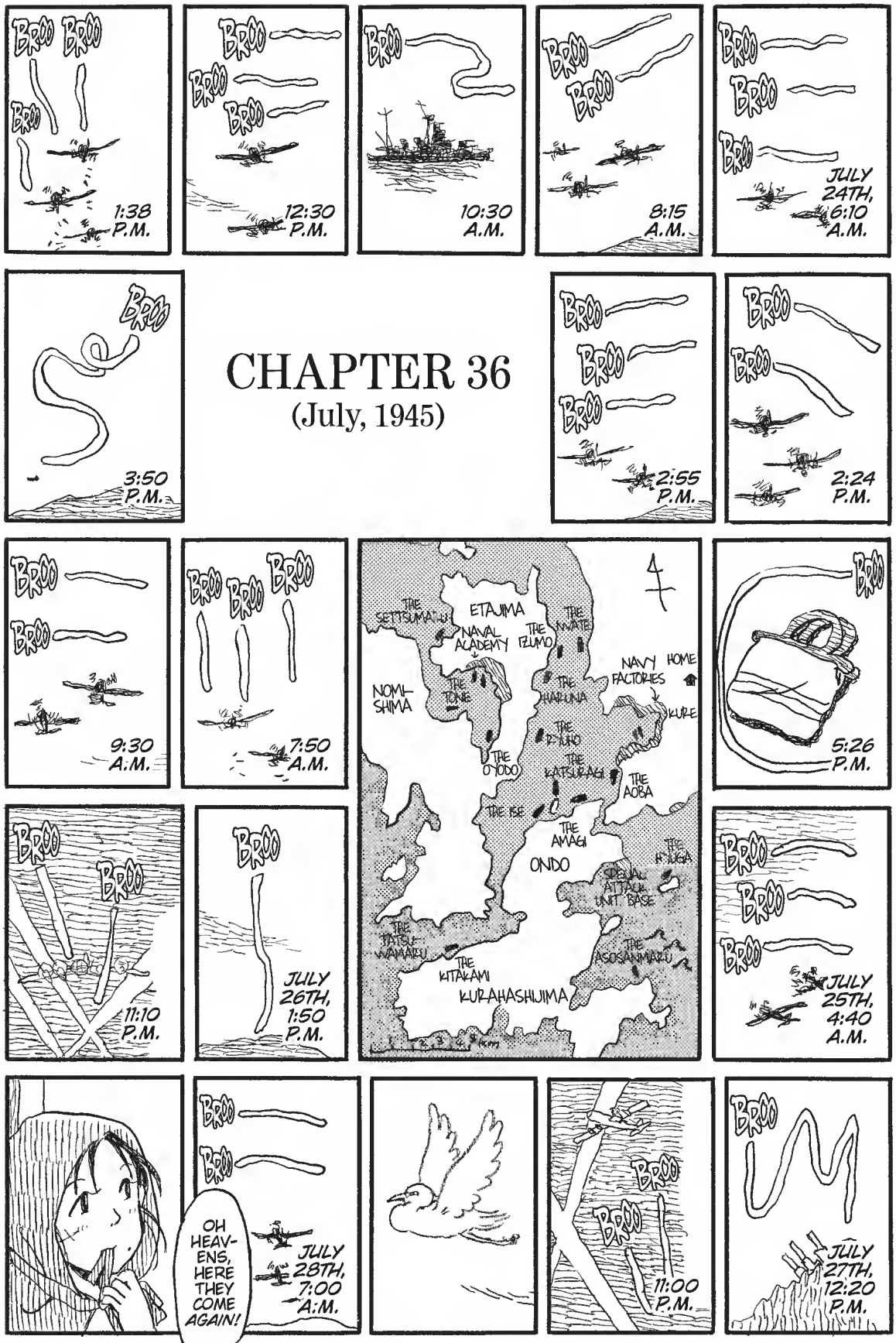


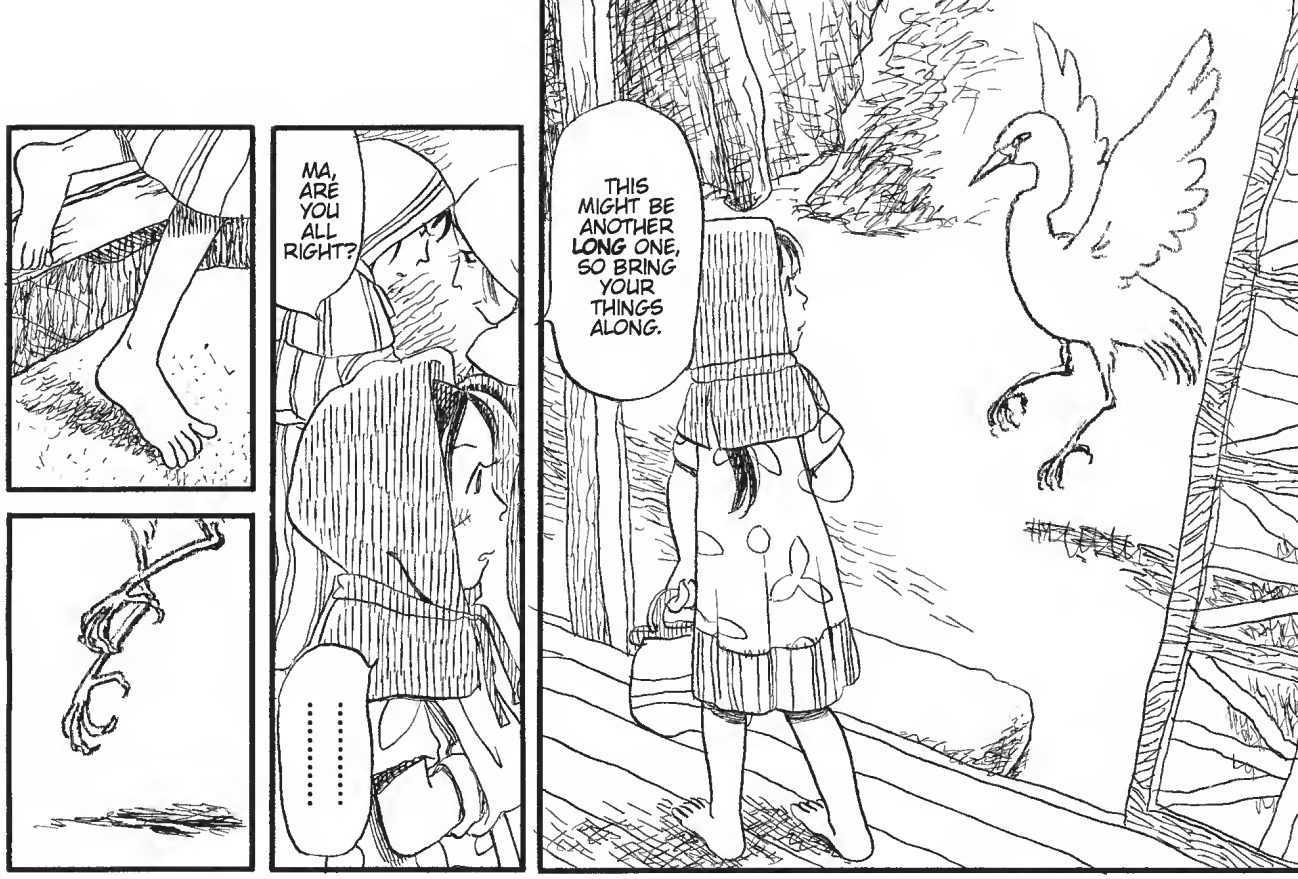


I'M REALLY, HONEST-LY GLAD.

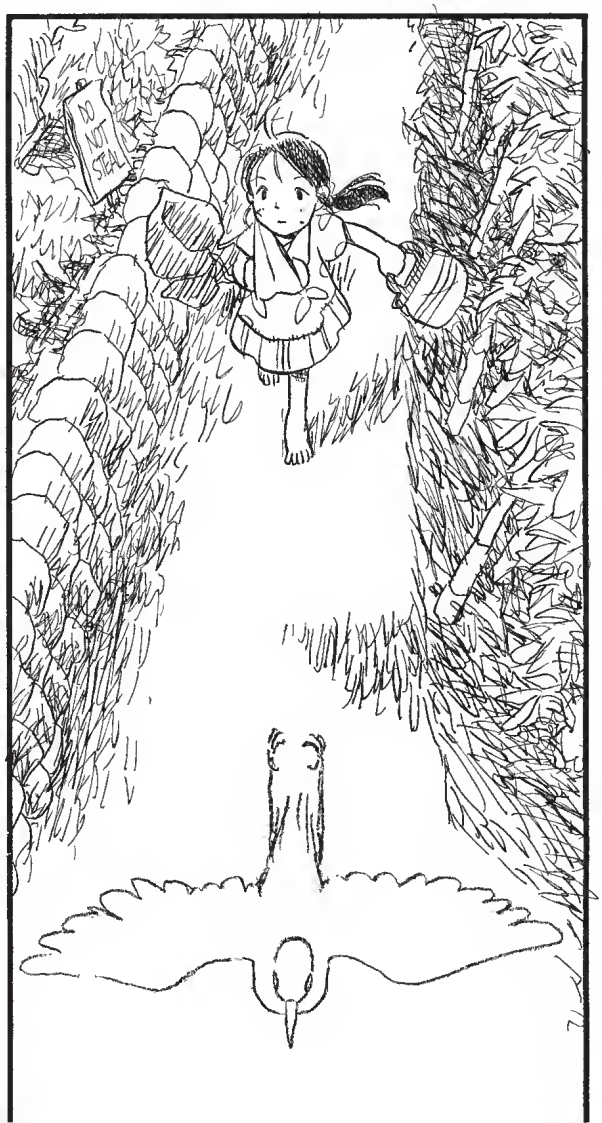
CHAPTER 36
(July, 1945)

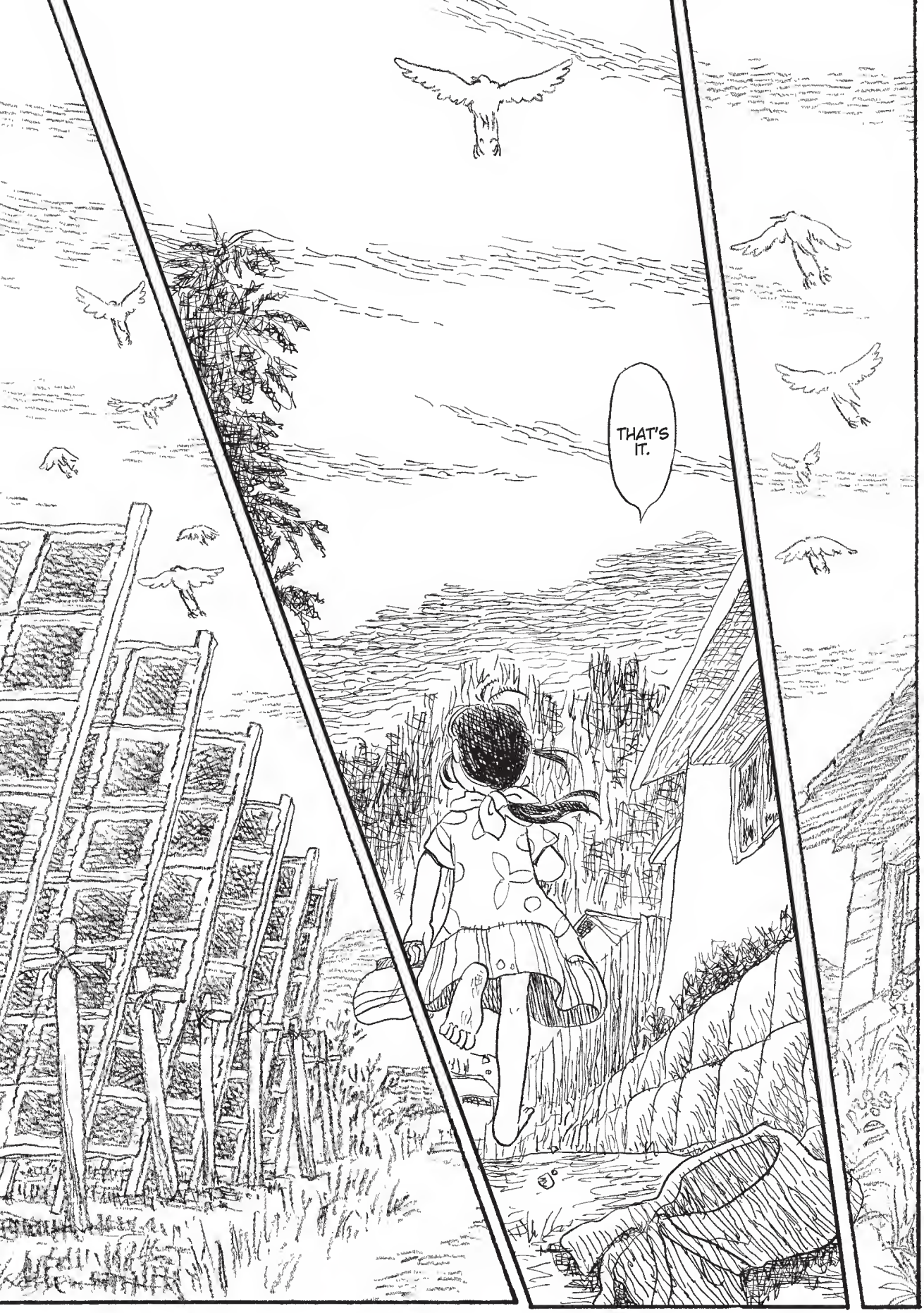
The Bombing of Kure. From July 24th to July 29th, 1945, Allied Forces conducted a large-scale attack on Kure harbor, targeting the Japanese Navy warships anchored there. Upwards of 1,850 carrier-based aircraft and almost 135 B-29 and B-24 bombers attacked in waves across those five days. By the end of the attack, the Japanese Imperial Navy had lost almost all of its large warships. 920 navy personnel were killed, with another 2,689 civilian casualties (121 dead) reported.



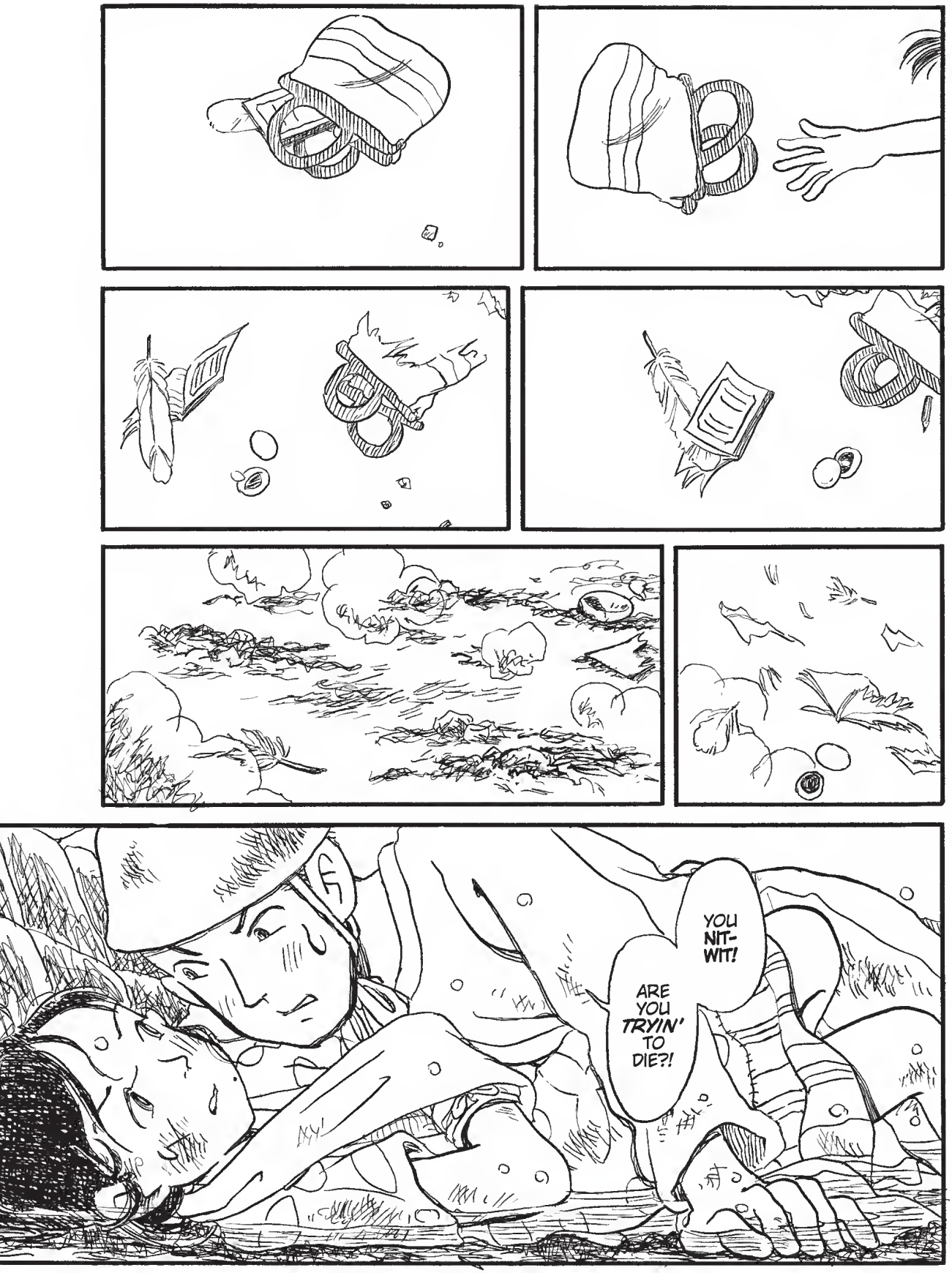

THIS MIGHT BE ANOTHER LONG ONE, SO BRING YOUR THINGS ALONG.

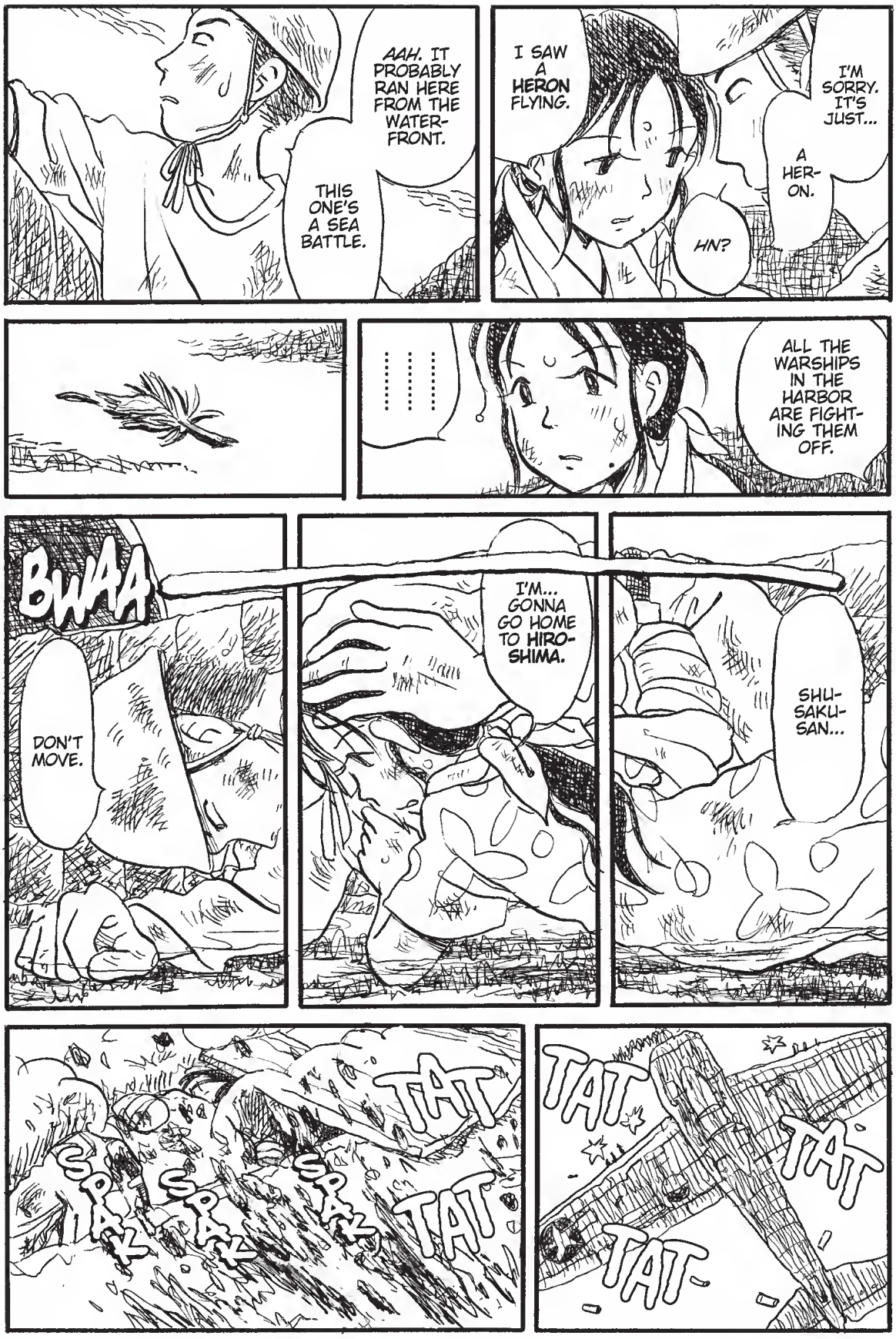
MA, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
.....


DO NOT STEAL


THAT'S IT.

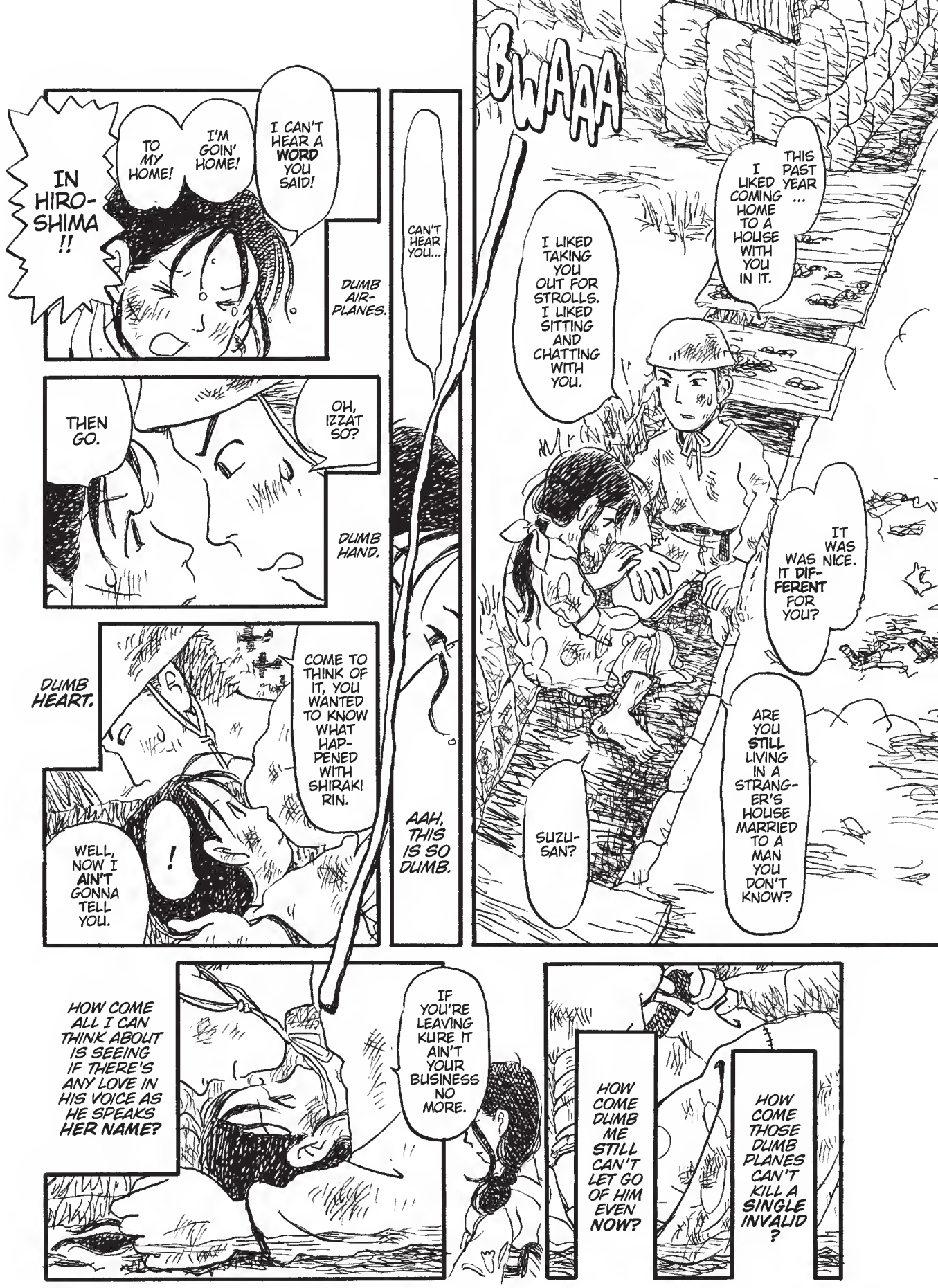
GO!
CROSS THE MOUN-TAINS TO REACH HIRO-SHIMA!
BWAAA
KEEP GOING THATAWAY!
BRAT
TAT
TAT
TAT
TAT
TAT
TAT


YOU NIT-WIT!
ARE YOU TRYIN' TO DIE?!



In July, 1945, the Japanese navy's surviving large warships were primarily anchored around Kure. However, thanks to fuel shortages, none of them could maneuver. Instead, they were being used almost exclusively as floating anti-aircraft batteries. One of them was the *Aoba*, the warship on which Mizuhara was stationed.

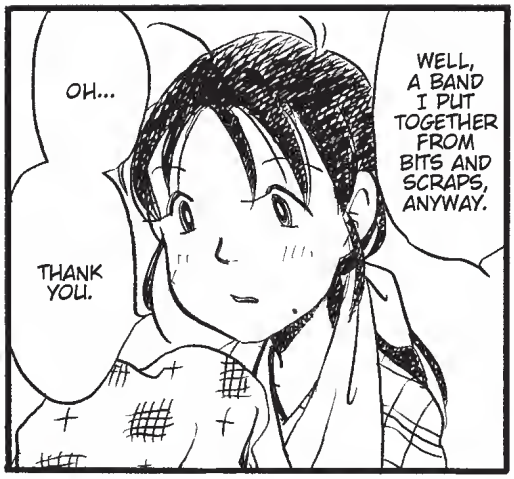
YOU DON'T MEAN TO COME BACK, NEITHER, DO YOU?
BWAA
OR... IS IT HARUMI?
YES.
YES.
OR IS IT THE AIR RAIDS YOU'RE SICK OF?
IS IT BECAUSE YOU LOST YOUR HAND?
YES.
BWAA
TAT TAT TAT TAT TAT
SUZU-SAN.
I EN-JOYED EVERY MINUTE OF IT.
THERE YOU GO THINK-ING THAT, TOGE-THER, THE TWO OF US CAN FIX ANY-THING.
"NO"!
SAY SOME-THIN' AL-READY!
.....
THERE, SEE?
THEN WHAT IS IT?

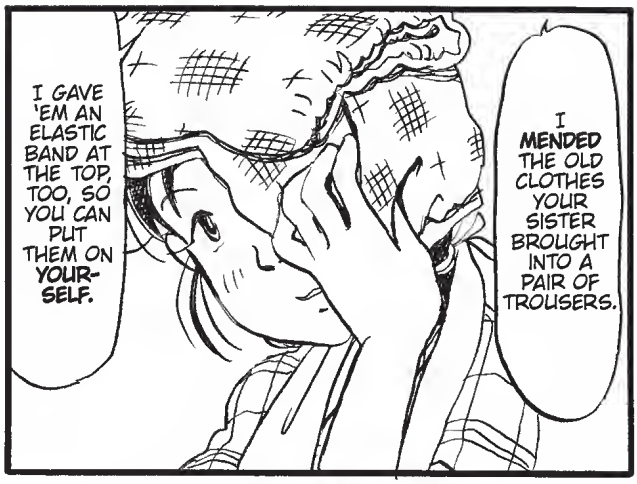

BWAAA
THIS PAST YEAR ...
I LIKED COMING HOME TO A HOUSE WITH YOU IN IT.
I LIKED TAKING YOU OUT FOR STROLLS. I LIKED SITTING AND CHATTING WITH YOU.
IT WAS NICE.
WAS IT DIFFERENT FOR YOU?
ARE YOU STILL LIVING IN A STRANGER'S HOUSE MARRIED TO A MAN YOU DON'T KNOW?
SUZU-SAN?
AAH, THIS IS SO DUMB.
CAN'T HEAR YOU...
I CAN'T HEAR A WORD YOU SAID!
I'M GOIN' HOME!
TO MY HOME!
IN HIRO-SHIMA !!
DUMB AIR-PLANES.
OH, IZZAT SO?
THEN GO.
DUMB HAND.
COME TO THINK OF IT, YOU WANTED TO KNOW WHAT HAP-PENED WITH SHIRAKI RIN.
!
WELL, NOW I AIN'T GONNA TELL YOU.
DUMB HEART.
IF YOU'RE LEAVING KURE IT AIN'T YOUR BUSINESS NO MORE.
HOW COME ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS SEEING IF THERE'S ANY LOVE IN HIS VOICE AS HE SPEAKS HER NAME?
HOW COME DUMB ME STILL CAN'T LET GO OF HIM EVEN NOW?
HOW COME THOSE DUMB PLANES CAN'T KILL A SINGLE INVALID?

CHAPTER 37
(August, 1945)

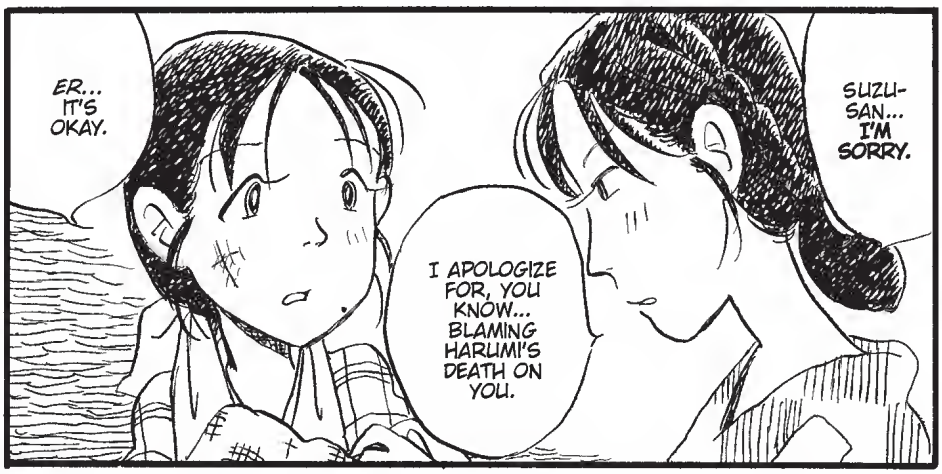
.....
.....
THINGS WILL BE MUCH LONE-LIER AROUND HERE WHEN YOU LEAVE, SUZU-SAN.
SO, WHEN IS IT?
HM?
YOUR AP-POINT-MENT.
.....
.....
OH, ER-- AROUND TEN O'-CLOCK.
.....

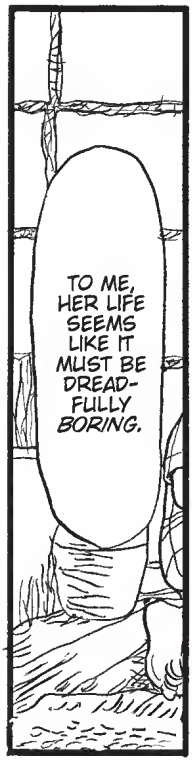
Every year, on the 29th day of the sixth month in the old lunar calendar, Eba town holds a grand and very boisterous Shinto rite honoring the sea, called the "Fire Festival." It was much more restrained during the war years, but even then there was still a street fair that the residents could enjoy.


OH...
THANK YOU.
WELL, A BAND I PUT TOGETHER FROM BITS AND SCRAPS, ANYWAY.

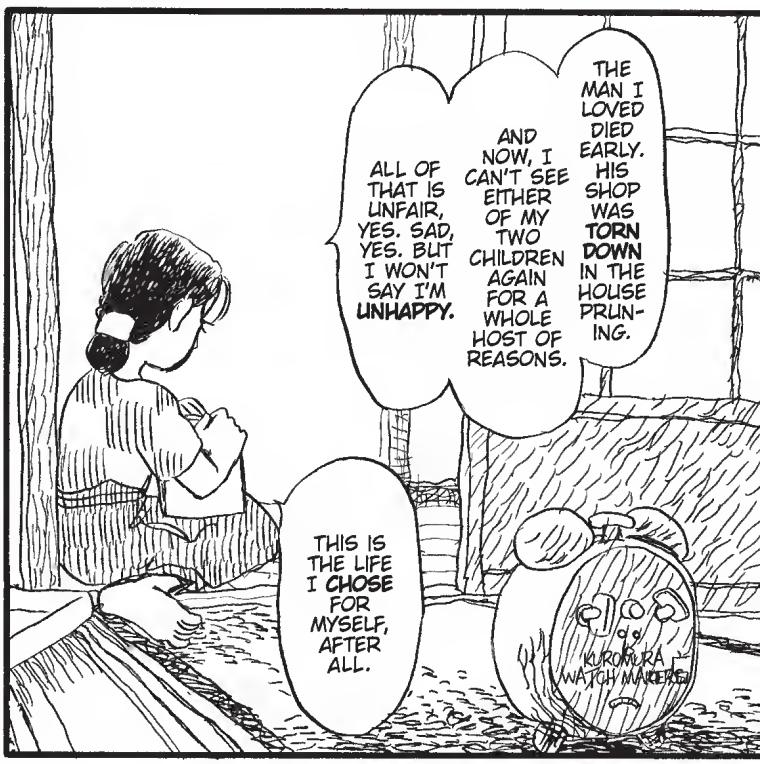

I GAVE 'EM AN ELASTIC BAND AT THE TOP, TOO, SO YOU CAN PUT THEM ON YOURSELF.
I MENDED THE OLD CLOTHES YOUR SISTER BROUGHT INTO A PAIR OF TROUSERS.

SUZU-SAN? LISTEN.

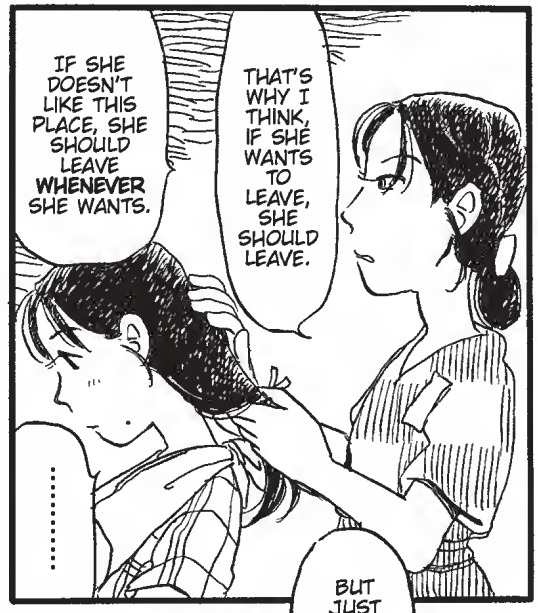

ER... IT'S OKAY.
I APOLOGIZE FOR, YOU KNOW... BLAMING HARUMI'S DEATH ON YOU.
SUZU-SAN... I'M SORRY.

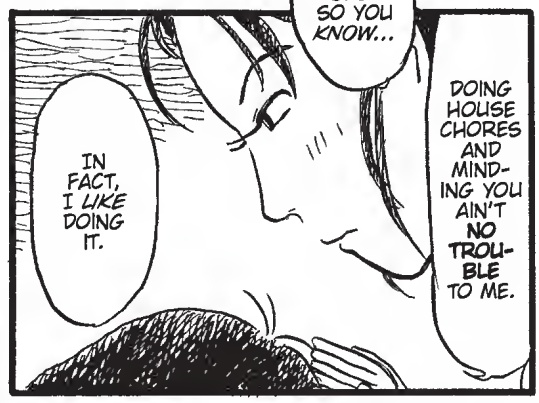

TO ME, HER LIFE SEEMS LIKE IT MUST BE DREAD-FULLY BORING.

SHE MINDS THE HOUSE AND DOES CHORES, JUST LIKE SHE'S TOLD.
INTO THAT LIFE CAME A COUNTRY GIRL WHO DID AS SHE WAS TOLD, MARRYING A MAN SHE DIDN'T KNOW.

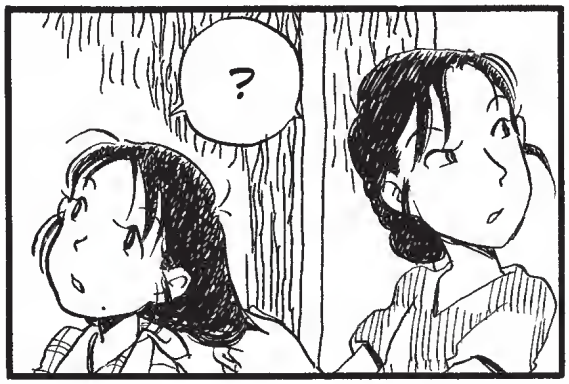

THE MAN I LOVED DIED EARLY. HIS SHOP WAS TORN DOWN IN THE HOUSE PRUN-ING.
AND NOW, I CAN'T SEE EITHER OF MY TWO CHILDREN AGAIN FOR A WHOLE HOST OF REASONS.
ALL OF THAT IS UNFAIR, YES. SAD, YES. BUT I WON'T SAY I'M UNHAPPY.
THIS IS THE LIFE I CHOSE FOR MYSELF, AFTER ALL.
KUROMURA WATCH MAKER

AS LONG AS YOU DON'T HATE IT HERE, THIS HOUSE IS **YOUR** HOUSE, SUZU-SAN.
.....
DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT FOLK WILL SAY. MAKE UP YOUR MIND FOR *YOUR-SELF.*


IF SHE DOESN'T LIKE THIS PLACE, SHE SHOULD LEAVE **WHENEVER** SHE WANTS.
THAT'S WHY I THINK, IF SHE WANTS TO LEAVE, SHE SHOULD LEAVE.
.....


IN FACT, I *LIKE* DOING IT.
BUT JUST SO YOU *KNOW...*
DOING HOUSE CHORES AND MIND-ING YOU AIN'T **NO TROU-BLE** TO ME.

IT'S A *NICE* DISTRAC-TION, KEEPING ME FROM WAL-LOWING IN THOUGHTS ON ALL I'VE **LOST.**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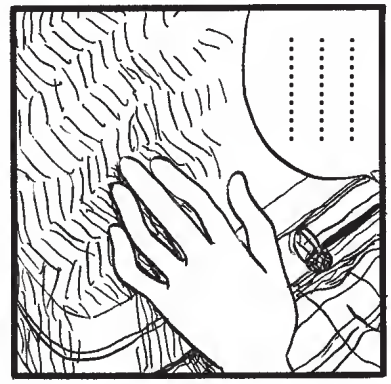
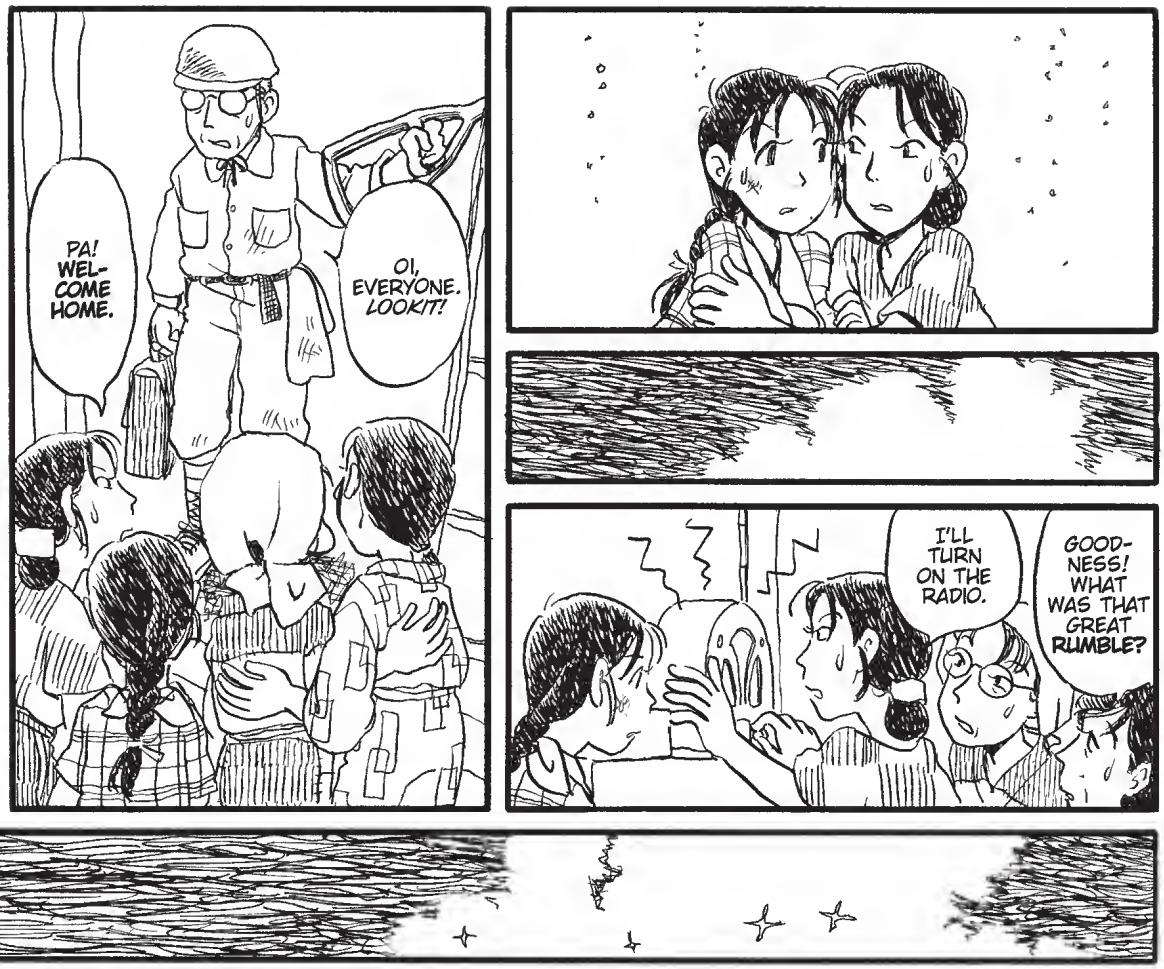
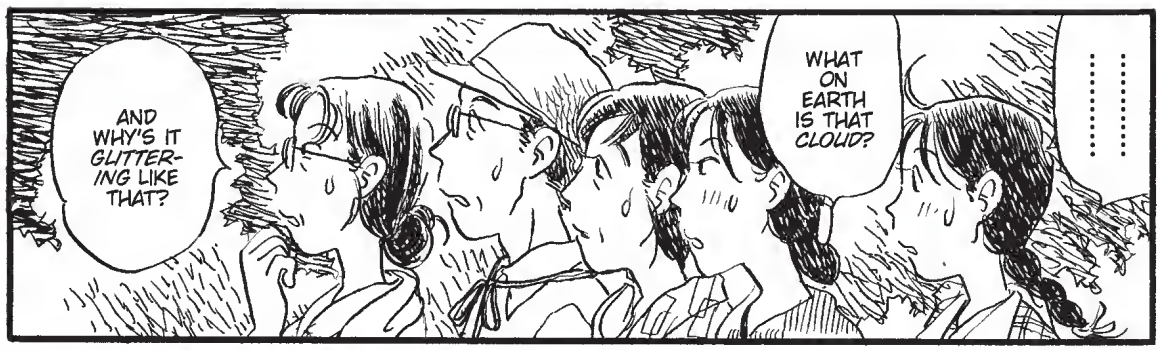
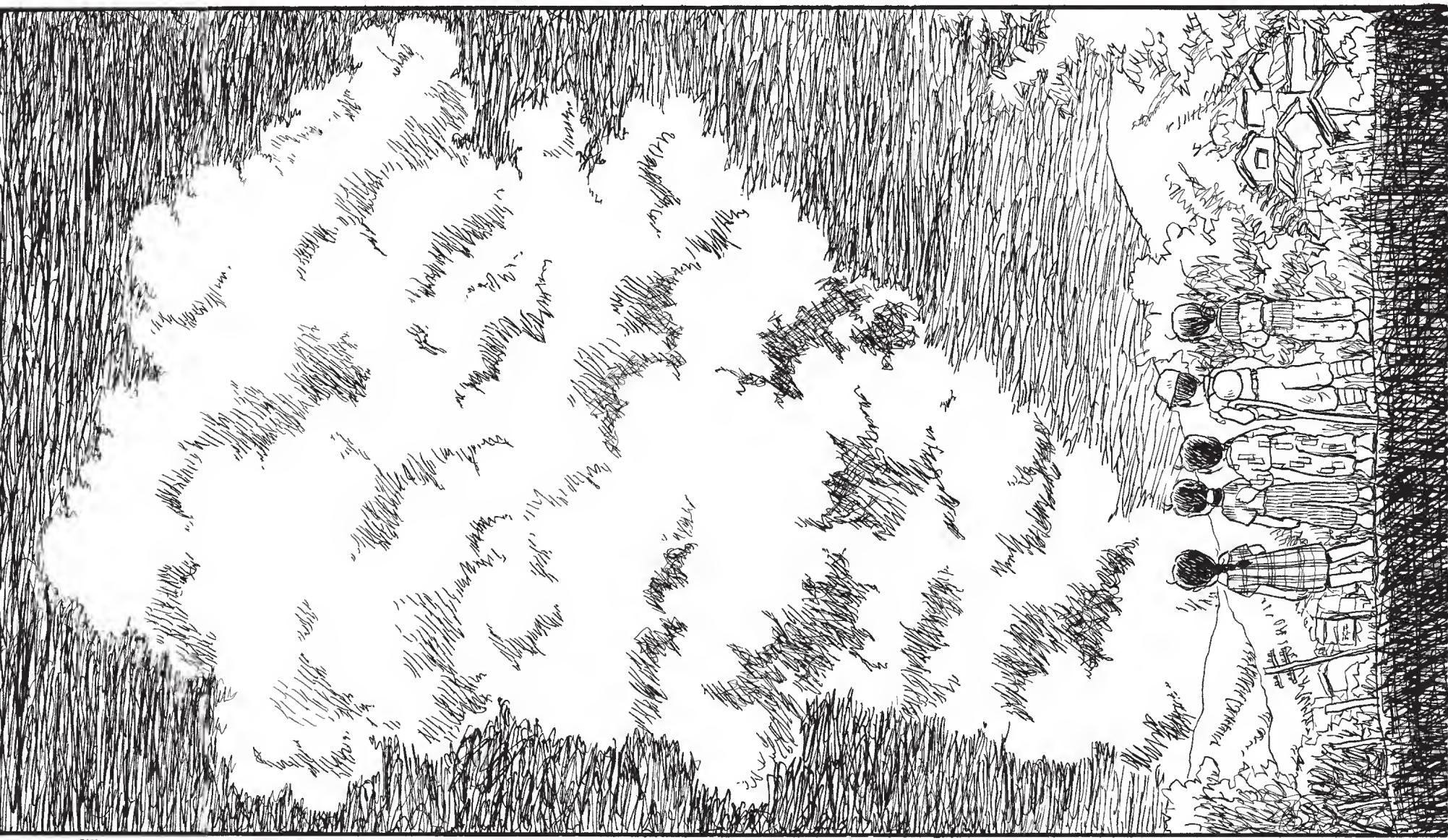

.....

KEIKO-CHAN, DID YOU SEE A FLASH JUST NOW?
I DID.
.....
WAS IT LIGHT-NING, MAYBE?
IT'S SUCH A NICE DAY OUT, THOUGH.
.....
UM... ELDER SISTER?
COULD... COULD I ASK YOU TO WASH THIS AFTER ALL?
AND, ER... COULD I ASK YOU TO LET ME STAY HERE, TOO?
O-OKAY! OKAY! NOW LET GO. THIS IS EMBAR-RASSING.
BOOO


PA! WELCOME HOME.
OI, EVERYONE. LOOKIT!
I'LL TURN ON THE RADIO.
GOODNESS! WHAT WAS THAT GREAT RUMBLE?

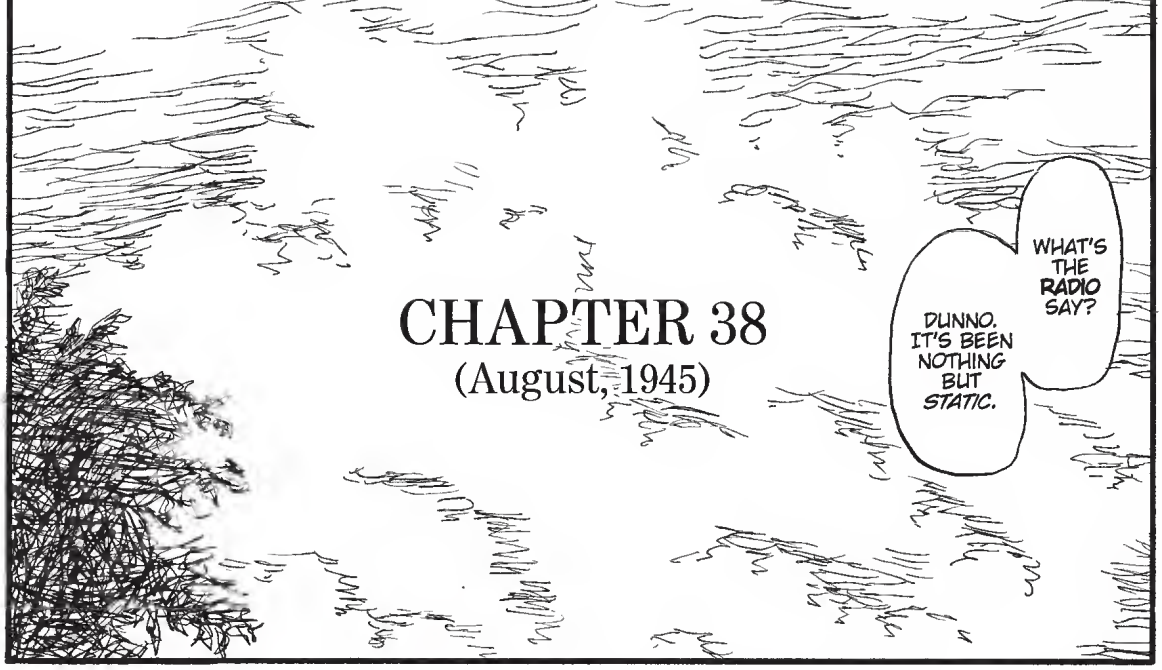

AND WHY'S IT GLITTERING LIKE THAT?
WHAT ON EARTH IS THAT CLOUD?
.....

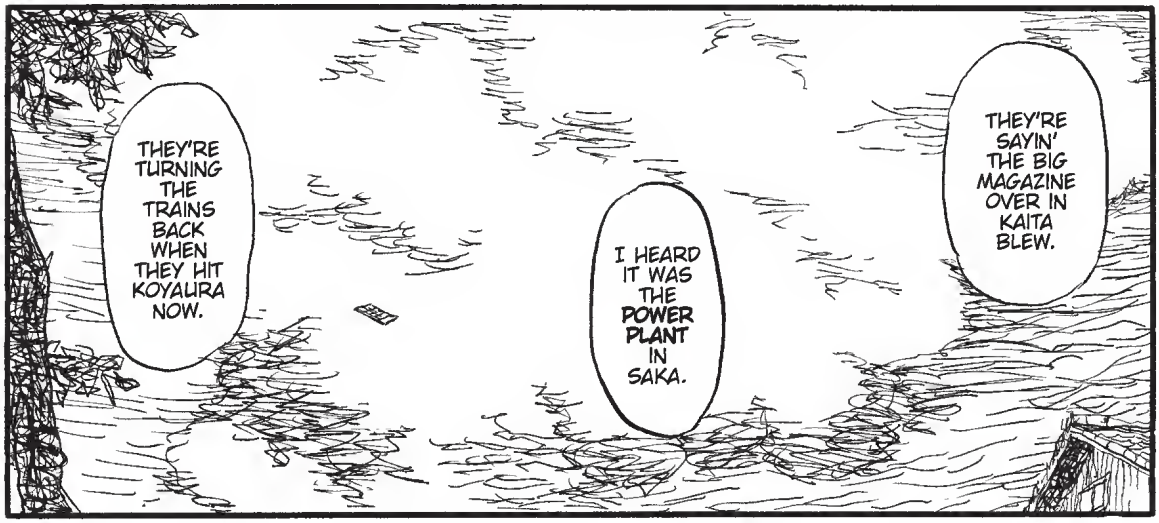
IS THAT A CLOUD...?
.....
"IT'S CALLED AN 'ANVIL CLOUD.'"
"SEE THAT BIG CLOUD?

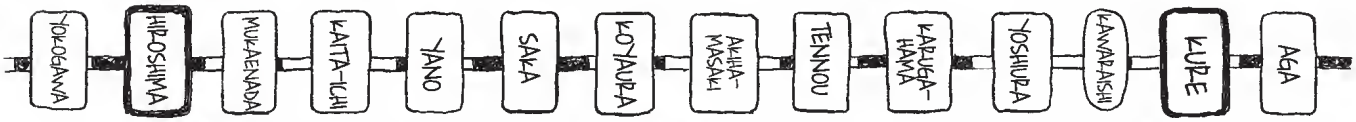


On August 6th, 1945, at approximately 8:15 A.M., the B-29 Superfortress Enola Gay dropped the first atomic bomb, nicknamed "Little Boy," on the city of Hiroshima.(Note. It was approximately 20 kilometers from the hypocenter of the blast in Hiroshima to the Hojo house in Kure. It is thought that it took approximately one minute for the sound of the explosion to cross that distance.)

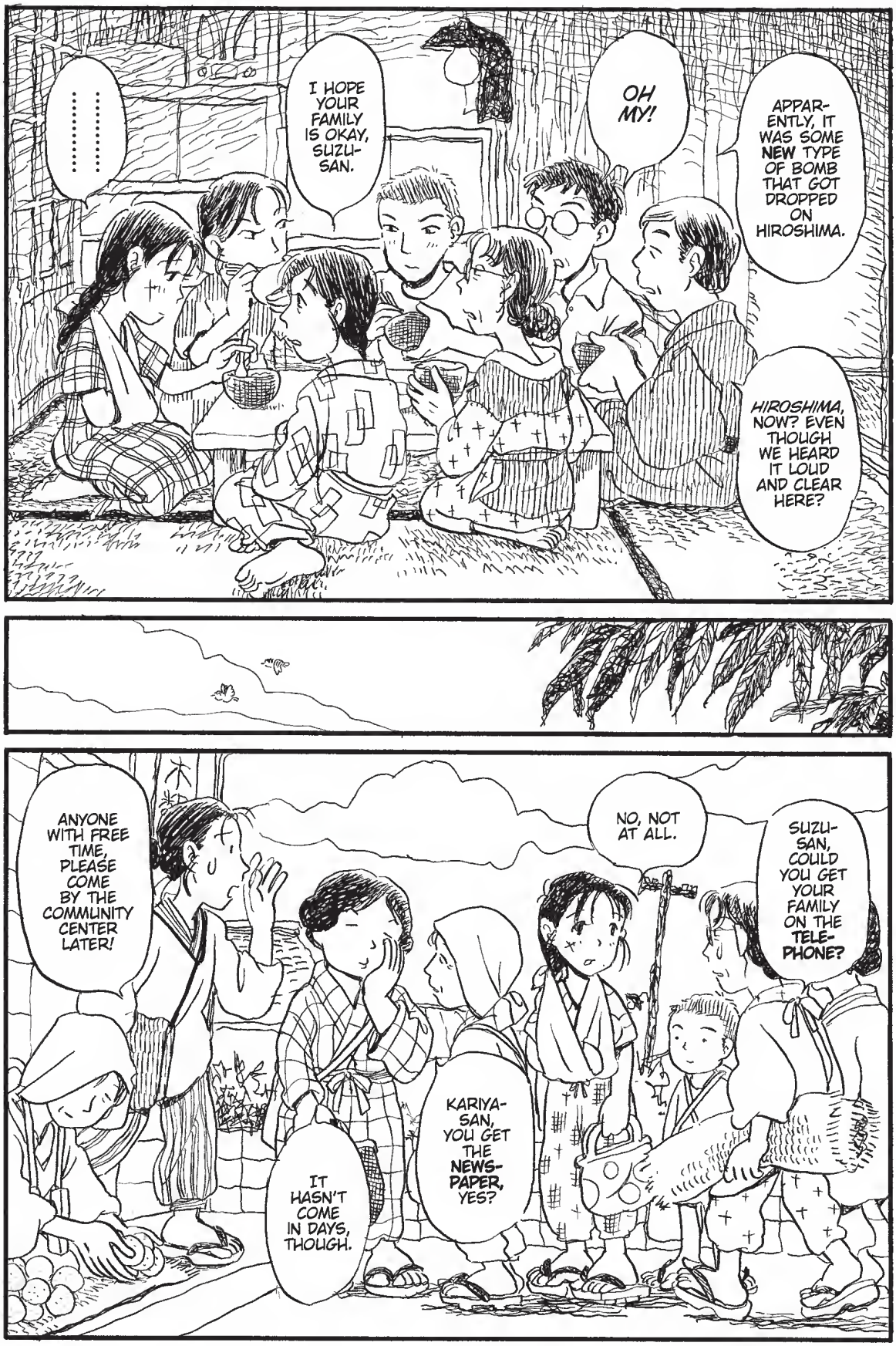
CHAPTER 38
(August, 1945)



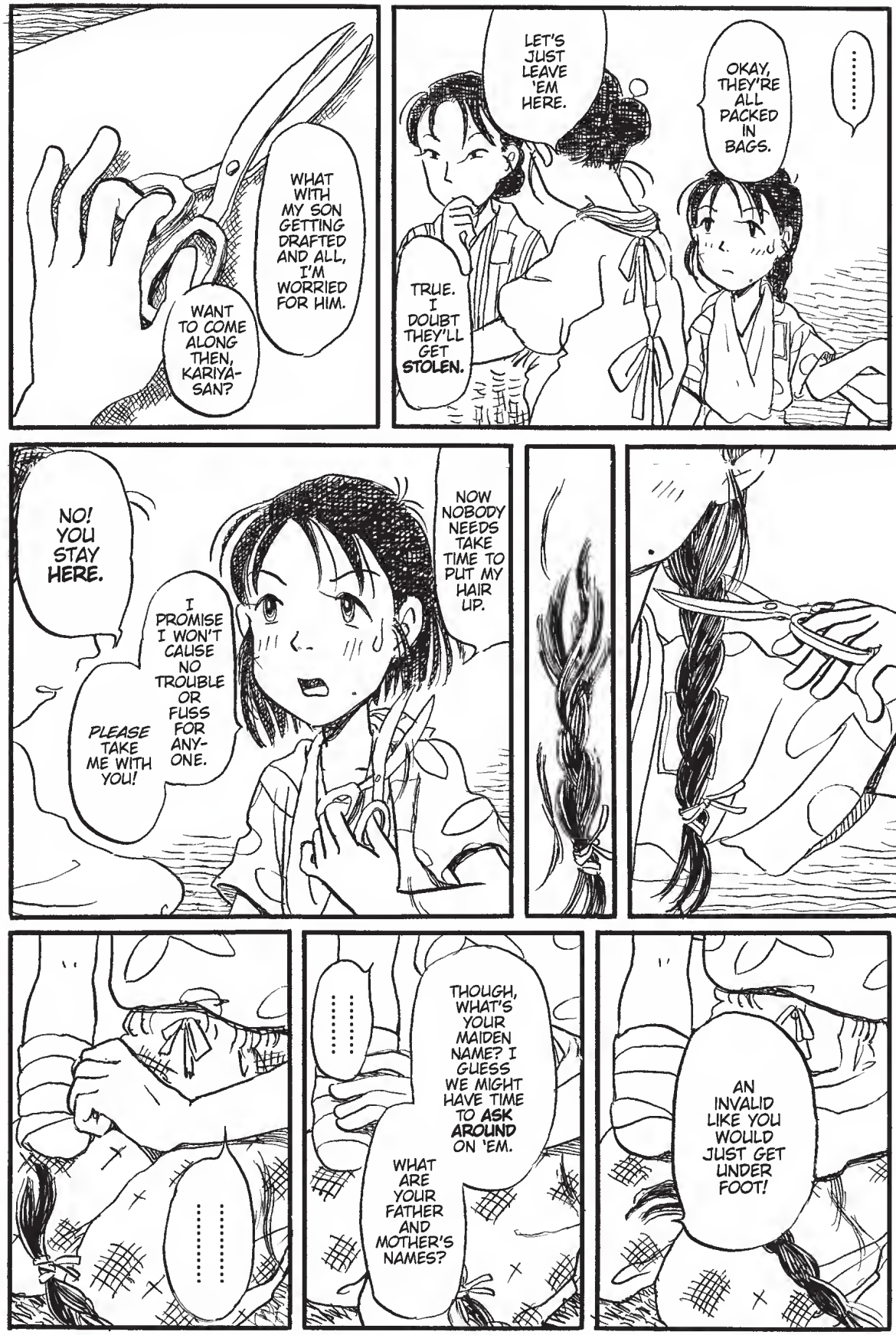




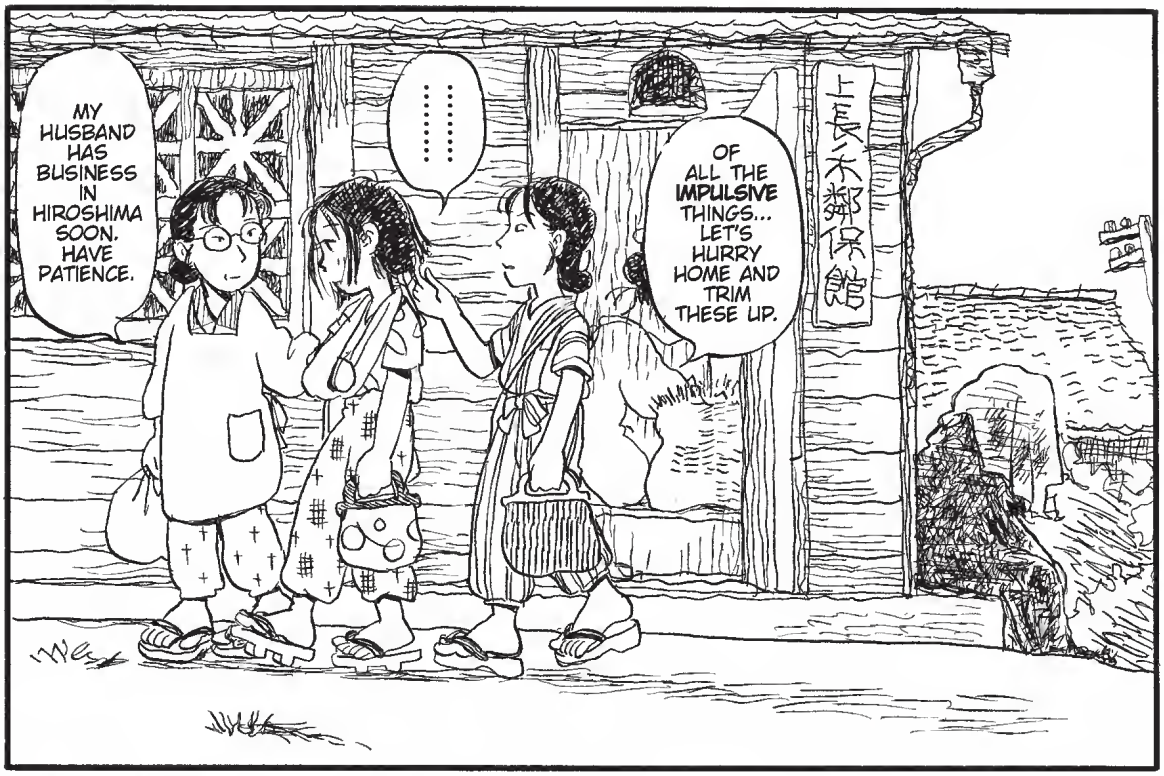
The Kawaraishi train station was closed in 1940 as a fuel conservation measure. It was not reopened until 1958

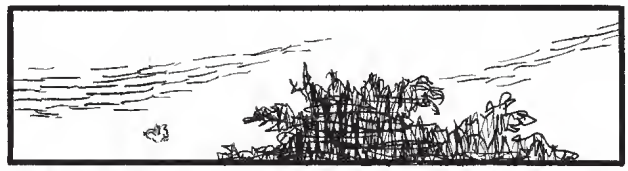

.....
I HOPE YOUR FAMILY IS OKAY, SUZU-SAN.
OH MY!
APPAR-ENTLY, IT WAS SOME NEW TYPE OF BOMB THAT GOT DROPPED ON HIROSHIMA.
HIROSHIMA, NOW? EVEN THOUGH WE HEARD IT LOUD AND CLEAR HERE?
ANYONE WITH FREE TIME, PLEASE COME BY THE COMMUNITY CENTER LATER!
IT HASN'T COME IN DAYS, THOUGH.
KARIYA-SAN, YOU GET THE NEWS-PAPER, YES?
NO, NOT AT ALL.
SUZU-SAN, COULD YOU GET YOUR FAMILY ON THE TELE-PHONE?

ER ...
IT GOES LIKE THIS, THEN THIS...
RIGHT?
YEP, THAT'S RIGHT. KEEP IT **TAUT,** SO IT DOESN'T TWIST ALL FUNNY.
OHO! SO YOU WERE A NURSE, CHITA-SAN?
YEP. I CAN'T SAY I'VE EVER MADE STRAW SANDALS BEFORE.
I DOUBT *ANYONE* 'ROUND HERE HAS.
ARGH! IT'S SO HARD TO DO THIS RIGHT WITH ONLY ONE HAND!
WHAT ARE YOU IMPLYING, *HM?*
OH, GIVE THAT HERE. FIRST YOU START WITH THE **STRAPS...**
WHAT WILL WE BE DOING WITH THESE SANDALS?
WE'RE TAKING THEM TO HIRO-SHIMA.
WHAT?
IF THAT BOMB MELTED THEIR STREETS LIKE OURS DID IN THE FIRE-BOMBING LAST MONTH, BOOTS AND CLOGS WILL JUST GET STUCK IN THE MUCK.
ERM, WHEN WILL YOU GO DELIVER 'EM?
TOMOR-ROW.
THE HOSPITAL I WORKED AT IS SENDING A TRUCK OVER WITH RELIEF STUFF.
COULD I GET A RIDE ON THAT TRUCK, TOO?
NOPE. **DON'T BOTHER.**

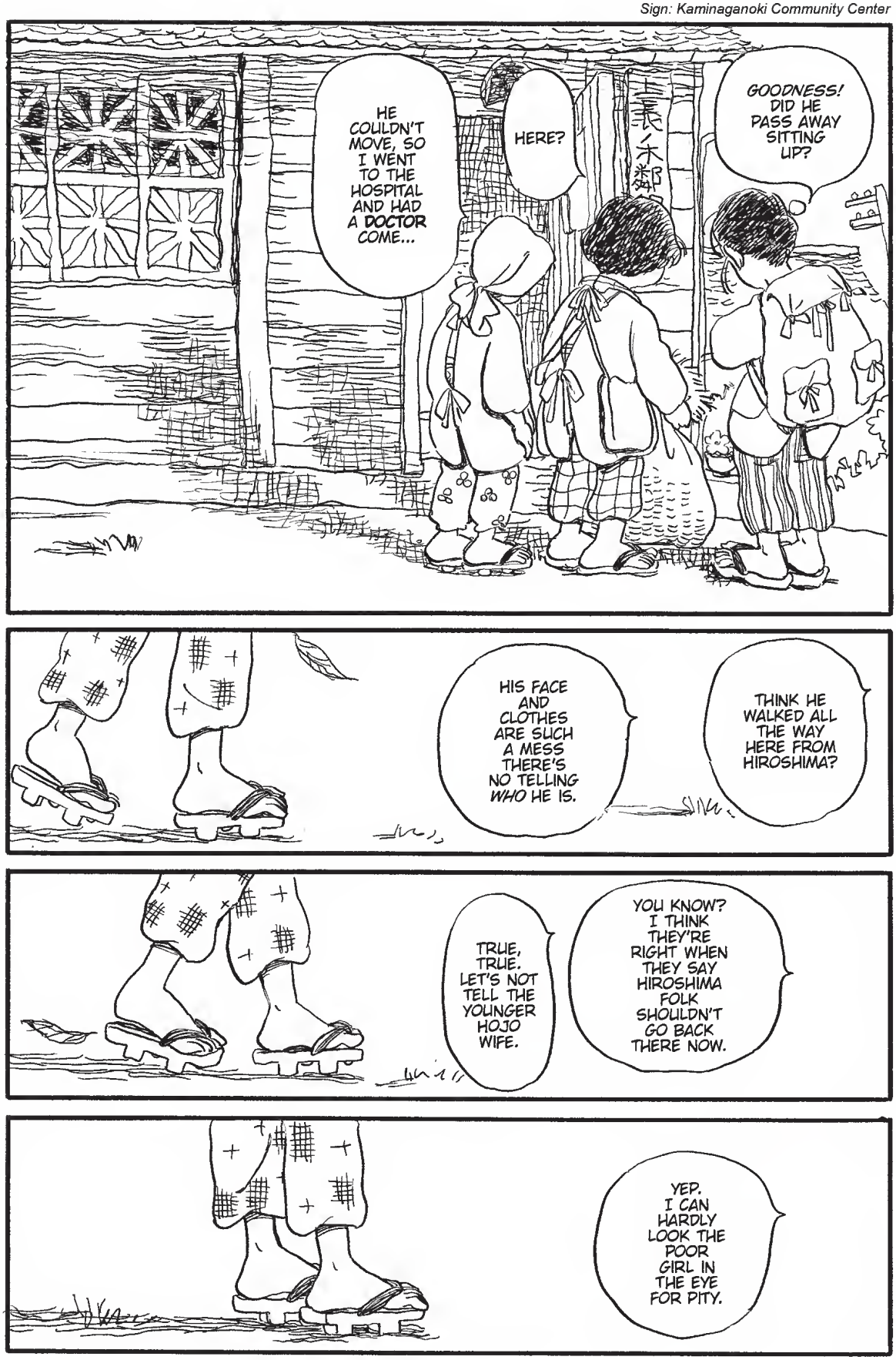

WHAT WITH MY SON GETTING DRAFTED AND ALL, I'M WORRIED FOR HIM.
WANT TO COME ALONG THEN, KARIYA-SAN?
LET'S JUST LEAVE 'EM HERE.
OKAY, THEY'RE ALL PACKED IN BAGS.
.....
TRUE. I DOUBT THEY'LL GET **STOLEN.**
NO! YOU STAY **HERE.**
I PROMISE I WON'T CAUSE NO TROUBLE OR FUSS FOR ANY-ONE.
PLEASE TAKE ME WITH YOU!
NOW NOBODY NEEDS TAKE TIME TO PUT MY HAIR UP.
.....
THOUGH, WHAT'S YOUR MAIDEN NAME? I GUESS WE MIGHT HAVE TIME TO **ASK AROUND** ON 'EM.
WHAT ARE YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER'S NAMES?
AN INVALID LIKE YOU WOULD JUST GET UNDER FOOT!

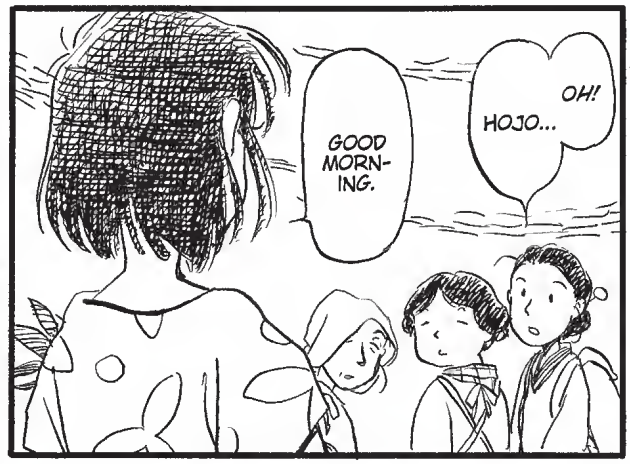
Sign: Kaminaganoki Community Center

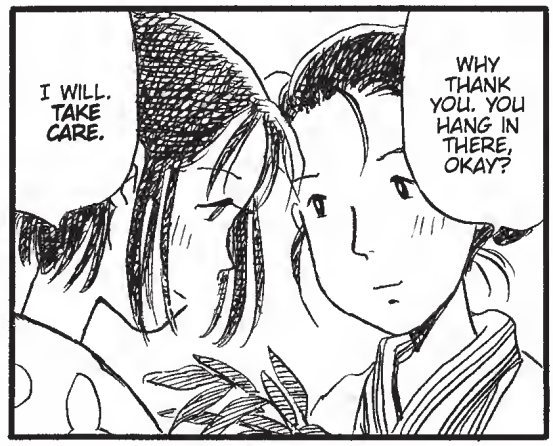


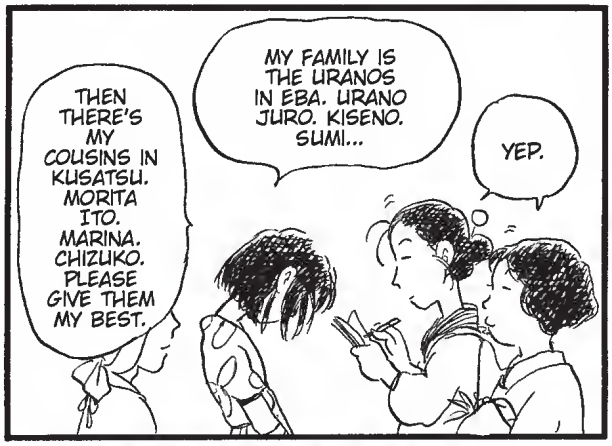


Sign: Kaminaganoki Community Center





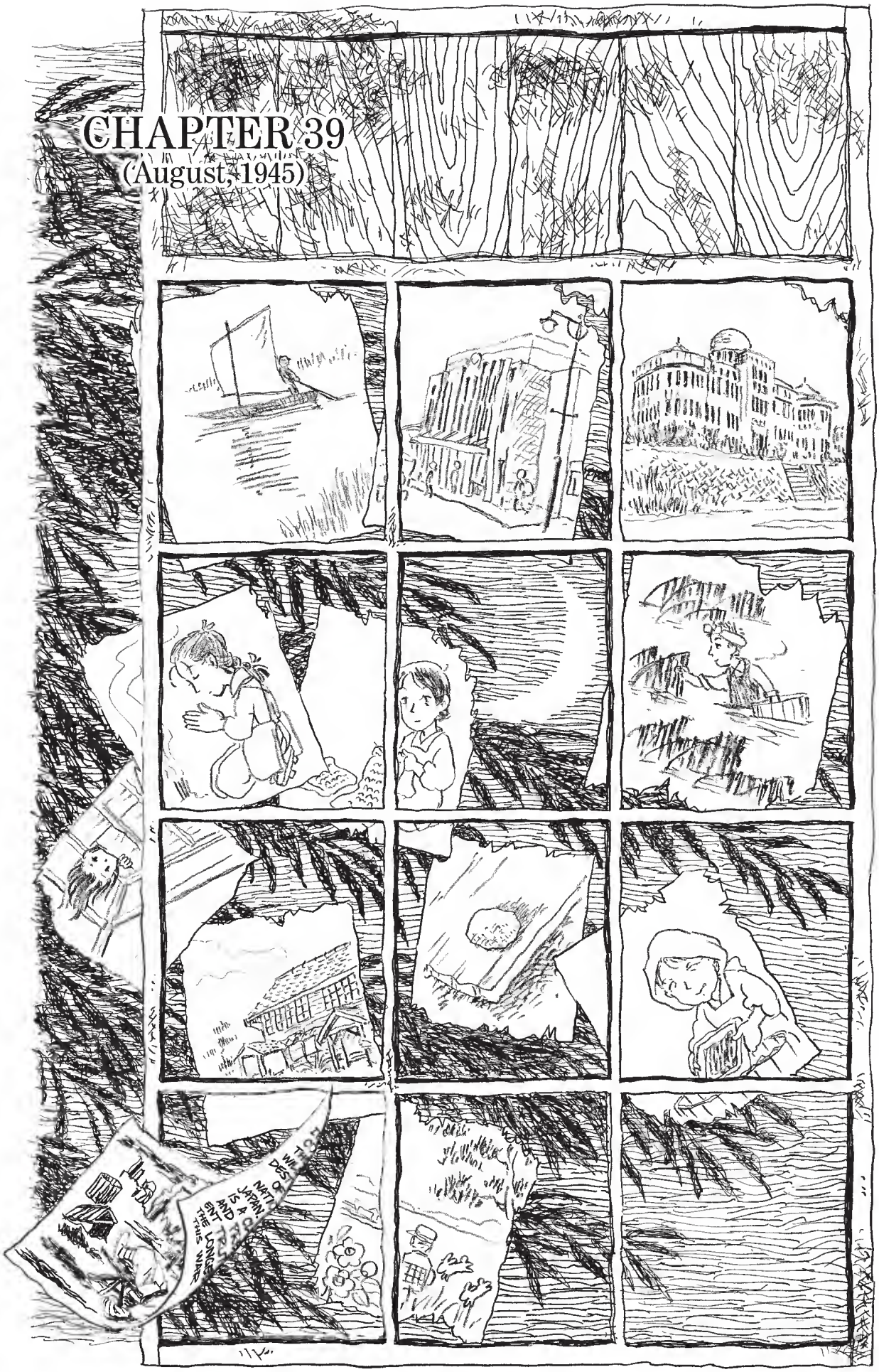




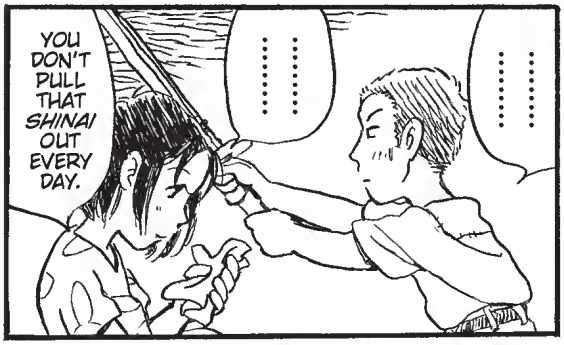
Eucalyptus leaves have a scent that insects dislike. The smoke they give off when burned is an effective mosquito repellant.

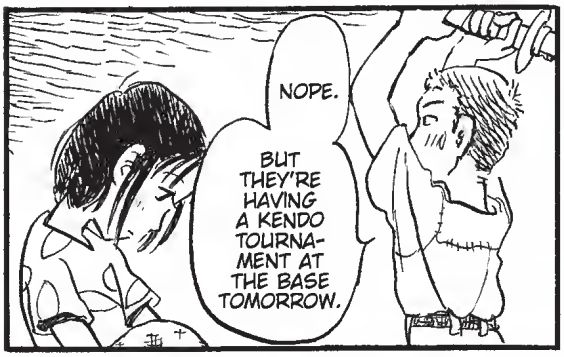
The day after the atomic bomb was dropped, several thousand Kure residents mobilized in a large-scale relief effort, taking needed supplies to the victims in Hiroshima. Of course, this effort exposed them to the residual radiation, making them secondary victims of the bombing.

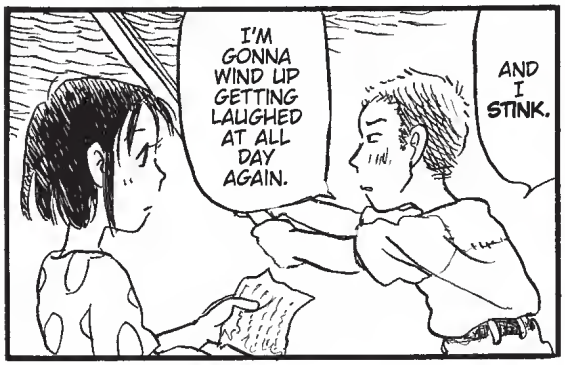
CHAPTER 39
(August, 1945)

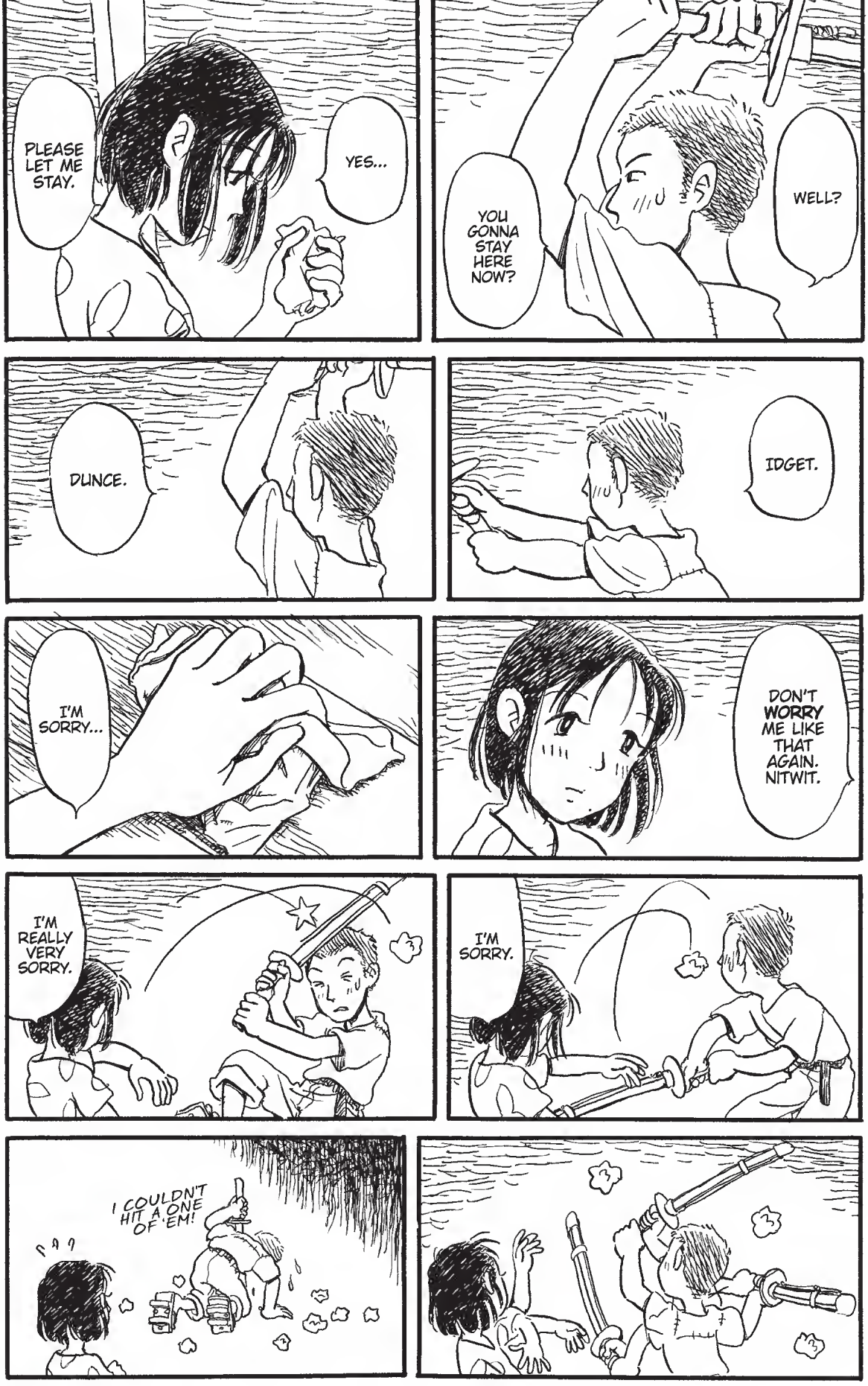


IF THIS WAR CONTINUES, THE RESULT WILL BE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE NATION OF JAPAN. THIS IS A CLEAR AND PRESENT TRUTH. THE LONGER THIS WAR CONTINUES, THE GREATER AN EFFORT IT WILL TAKE TO REBUILD AFTERWARD. JAPAN MAY BE RENDERED WEAK AND POWERLESS FOREVER. IT IS EASY TO SACRIFICE YOUR LIFE FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR COUNTRY. HOWEVER, BRINGING AN END TO THIS WAR AND BEGINNING THE EFFORT TO REBUILD IS THE TRUE ACT OF LOYALTY.

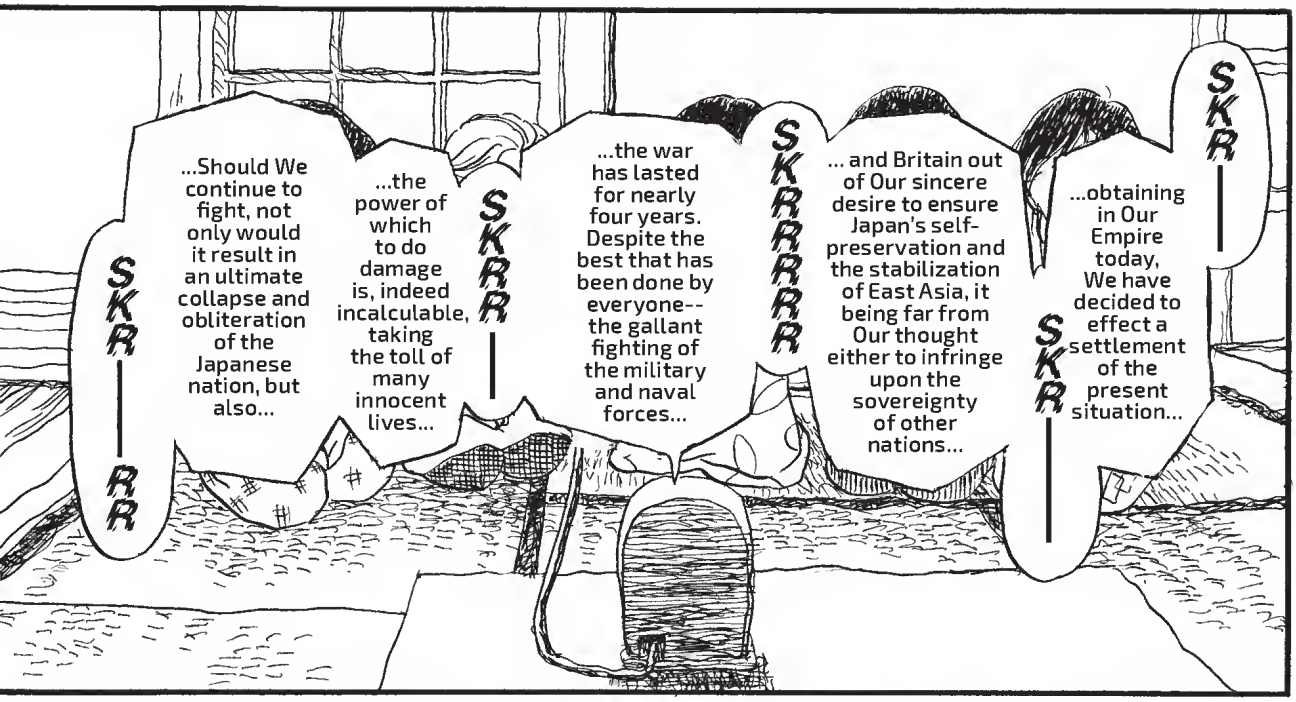


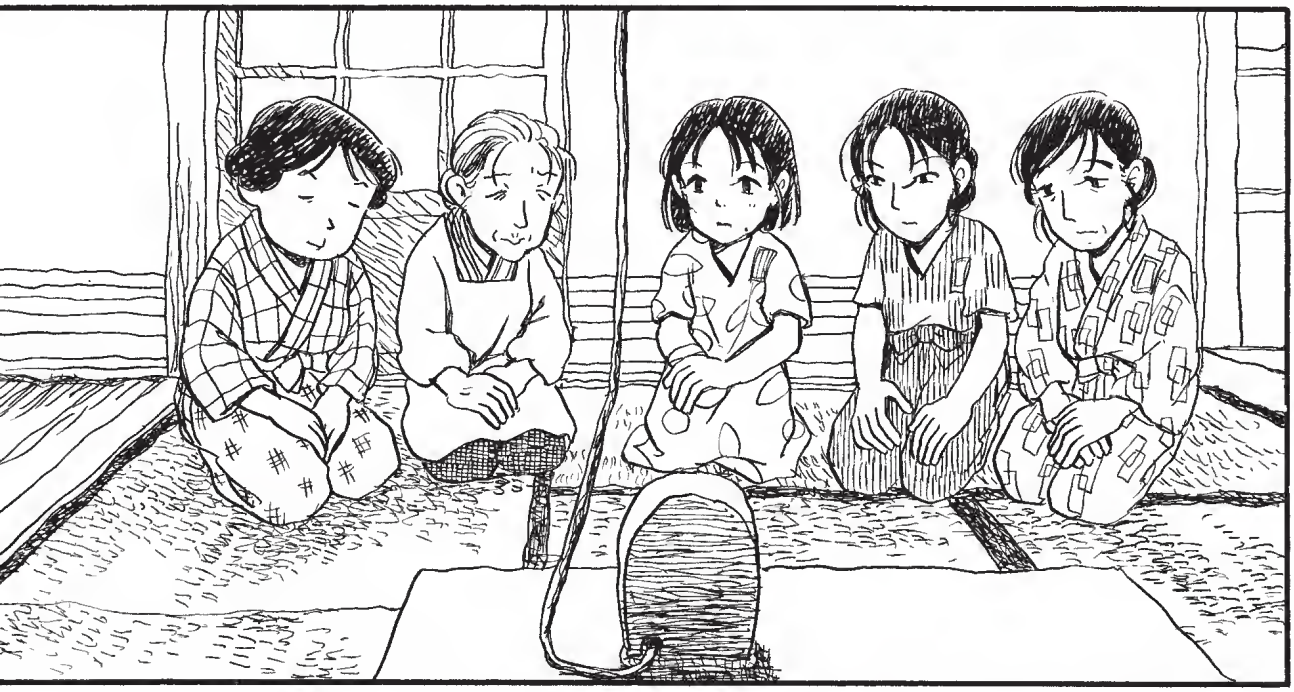


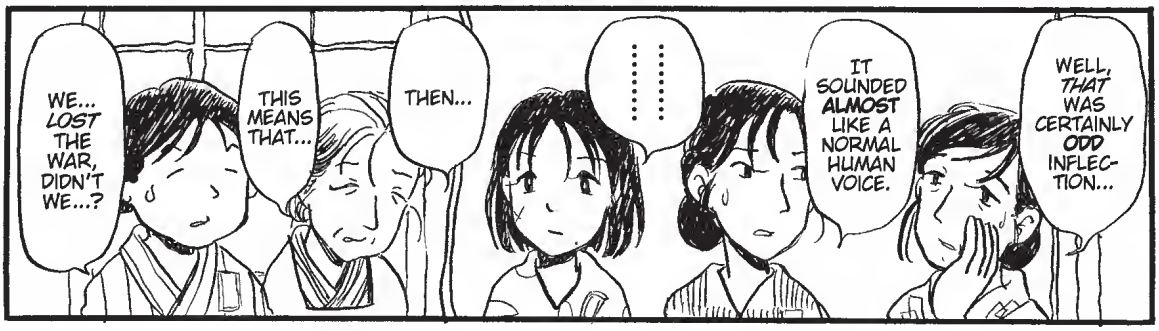


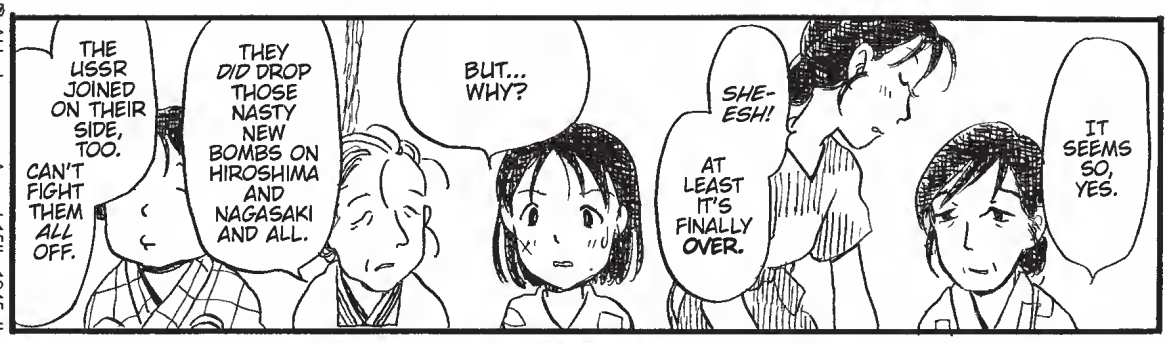

PLEASE LET ME STAY.
YES...
YOU GONNA STAY HERE NOW?
WELL?
DUNCE.
IDGET.
I'M SORRY...
DON'T WORRY ME LIKE THAT AGAIN. NITWIT.
I'M REALLY VERY SORRY.
I'M SORRY.
I COULDN'T HIT A ONE OF 'EM!

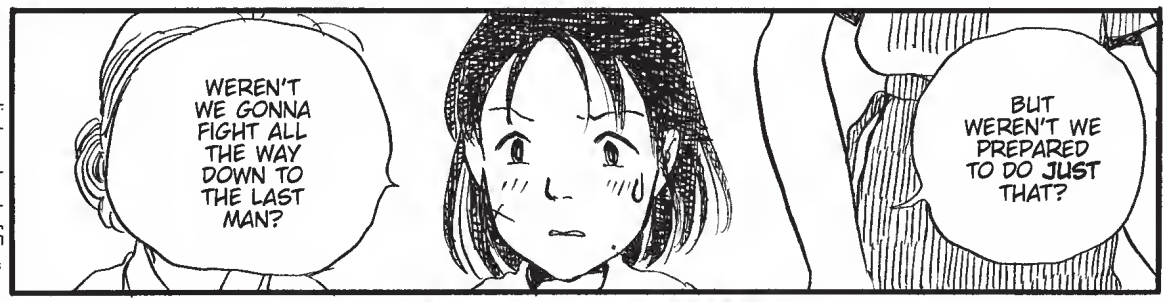
[1] At the end of the Pacific War, the Allied Forces used B-29 Superfortresses to drop millions of propaganda leaflets on specifically targeted Japanese cities, purportedly hoping to reduce innocent casualties. Called the "LeMay bombing leaflet," as their use was ordered by General Curtis LeMay, these leaflets warned of impending bombings or exhorted the Japanese people to accept surrender. In response, the Japanese government ordered anyone who picked up these leaflets to turn them over directly to the authorities without reading them. There were strict penalties for anyone who did read or keep them.


SKR—RR
...Should We continue to fight, not only would it result in an ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation, but also...
...the power of which to do damage is, indeed incalculable, taking the toll of many innocent lives...
SKRR—
...the war has lasted for nearly four years. Despite the best that has been done by everyone-- the gallant fighting of the military and naval forces...
SKRRRRRR
... and Britain out of Our sincere desire to ensure Japan's self-preservation and the stabilization of East Asia, it being far from Our thought either to infringe upon the sovereignty of other nations...
SKR—
...obtaining in Our Empire today, We have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation...
SKR—

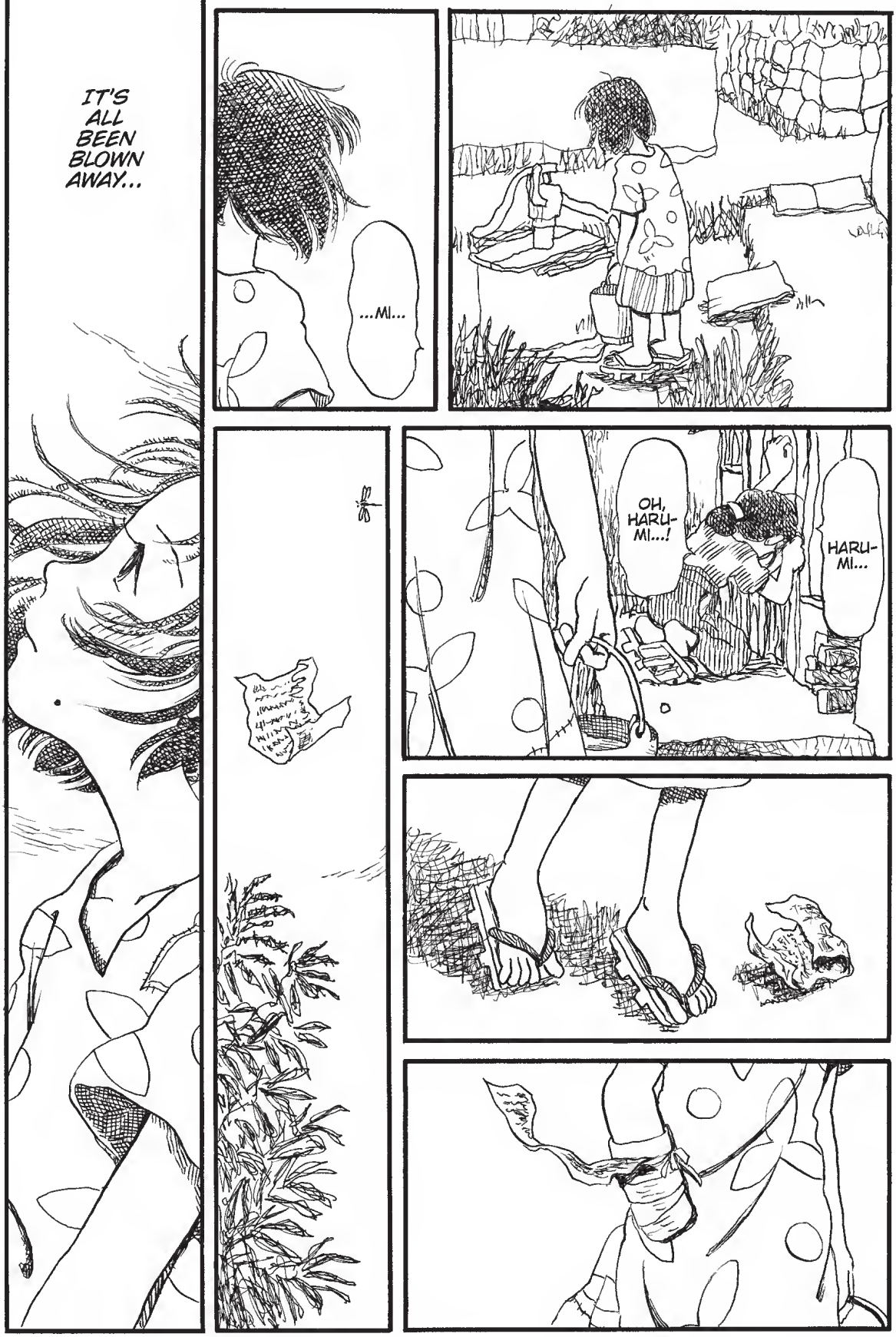


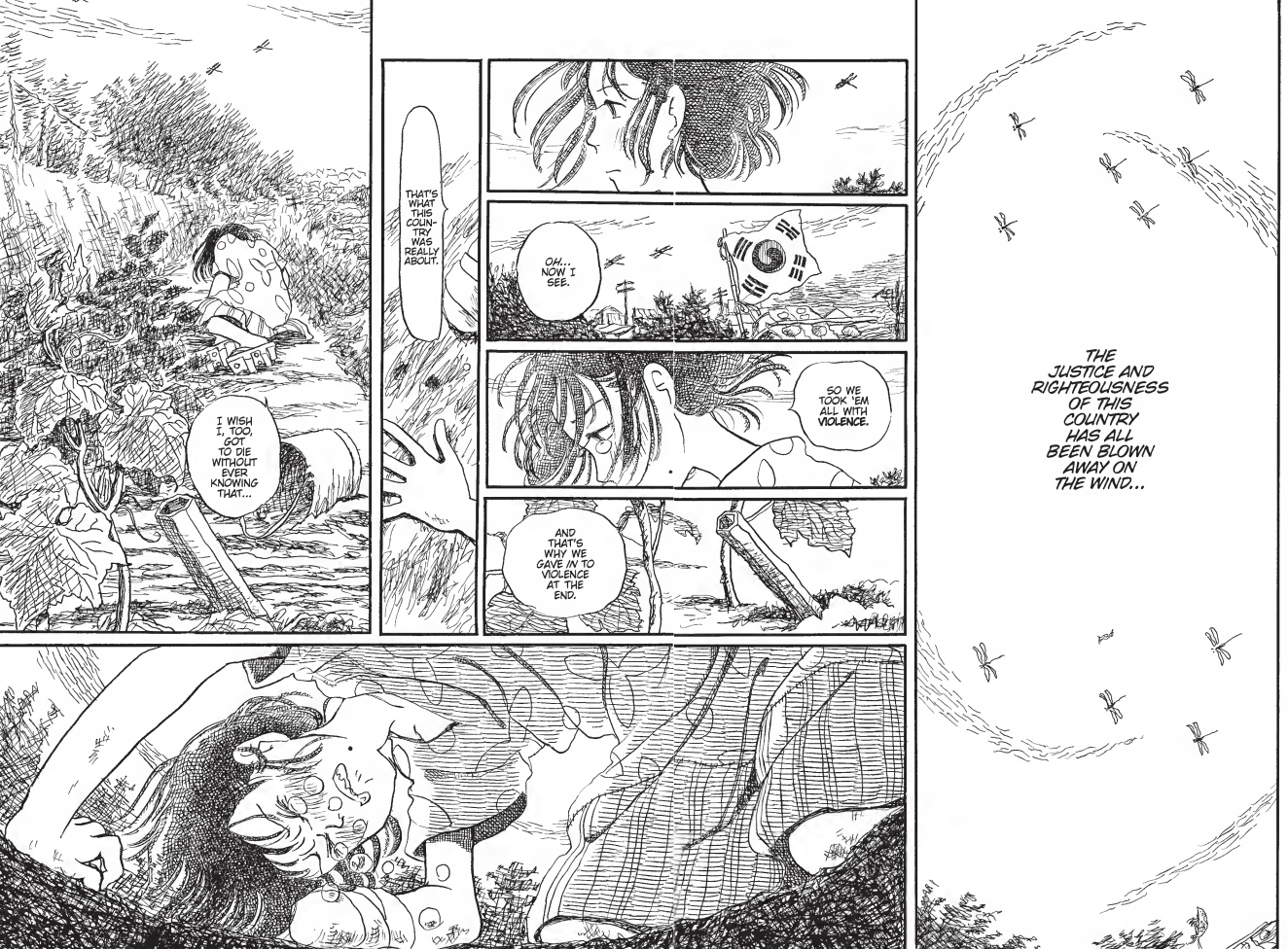

WE... *LOST* THE WAR, DIDN'T WE...?
THIS MEANS THAT...
THEN...
.....
IT SOUNDED **ALMOST** LIKE A NORMAL HUMAN VOICE.
WELL, *THAT* WAS CERTAINLY **ODD** INFLECTION...

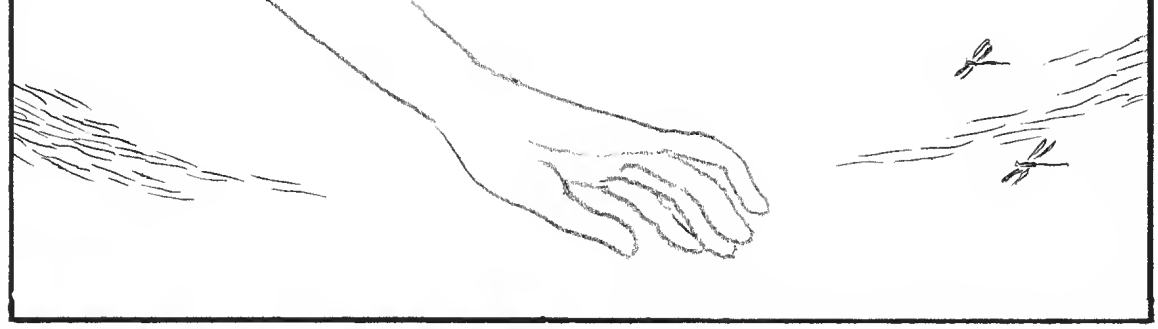


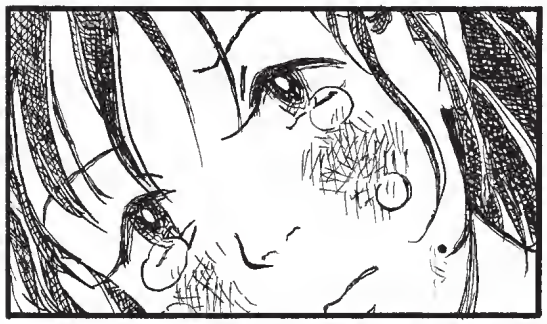


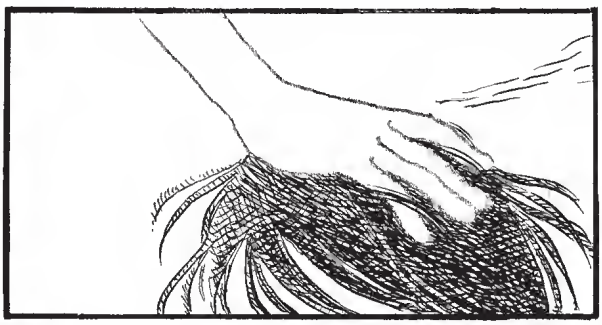
At high noon on August 15th, 1945, there was a radio broadcast of Emperor Hirohito reading aloud the Imperial Rescript on the Termination of the War, which brought World War II to a close. This would later be called the Jewel Voice Broadcast. At the time, Japanese citizens still thought the Emperor was a living god. This was likely the first time the common people of Japan heard the Imperial voice. Unfortunately, given that the broadcast was of a phonograph recording of the Emperor reading the Rescript, and that the speech itself was chanted in classical courtly Japanese, most people barely understood what was being said.

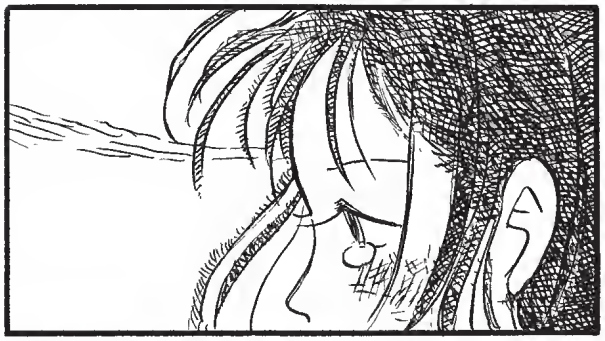

IT'S ALL BEEN BLOWN AWAY...
...MI...
OH, HARU-MI...!
HARU-MI...

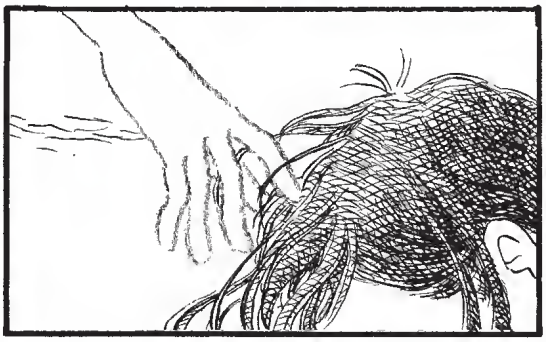

I WISH I, TOO, GOT TO DIE WITHOUT EVER KNOWING THAT...
THAT'S WHAT THIS COUNTRY WAS REALLY ABOUT.
OH... NOW I SEE.
SO WE TOOK 'EM ALL WITH VIOLENCE.
AND THAT'S WHY WE GAVE IN TO VIOLENCE AT THE END.
THE JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THIS COUNTRY HAS ALL BEEN BLOWN AWAY ON THE WIND...

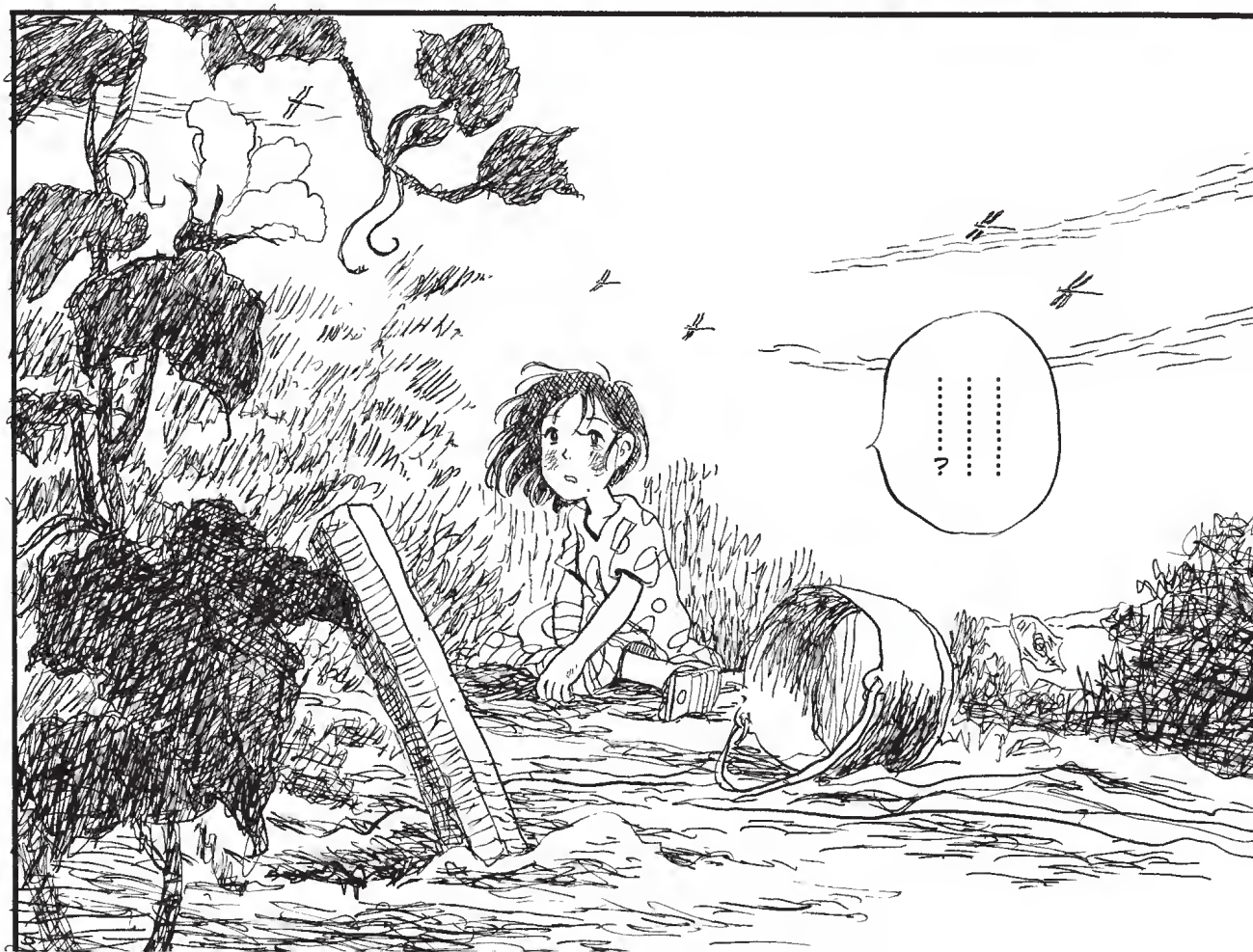




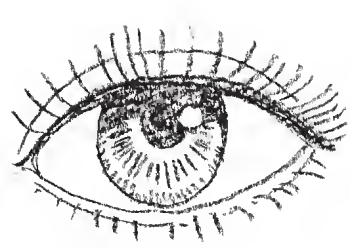








CHAPTER 40
(September, 1945)



NOW WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS A BIG ROUND EYE.

IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A CHOSEN LAND PROTECTED BY DIVINE GRACE.

AND THIS HERE IS WHAT WAS, UNTIL LAST MONTH, HAILED AS THE UNCONQUERABLE LAND OF THE GODS.

FWOOO

THIS IS THE REMNANTS OF WHAT USED TO BE THE PACIFIC'S GREATEST SHIPYARD.

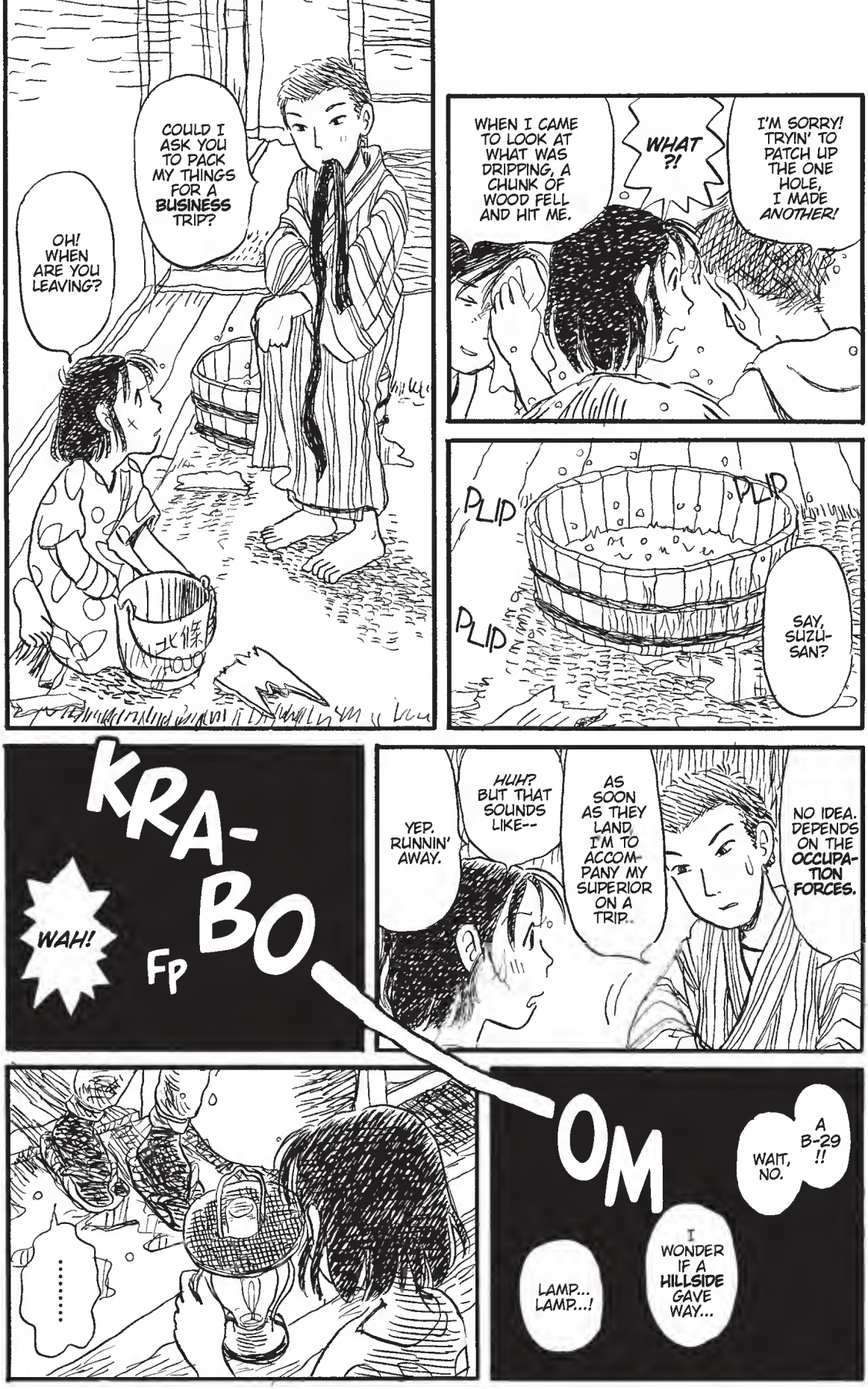
IT'S ALL RIGHT. PLEASE STAY INSIDE AND REST UP.

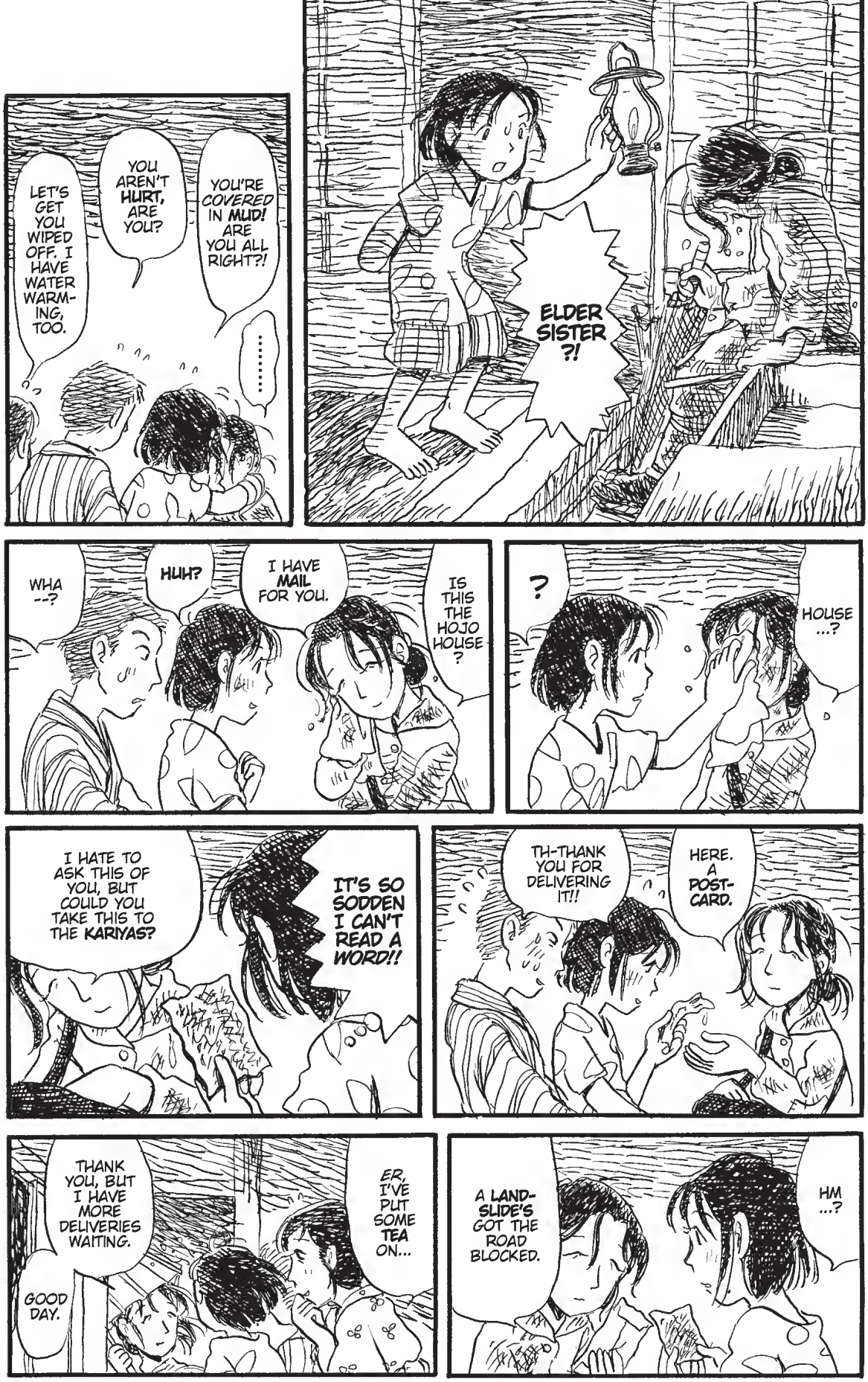
I'D GO UP AND FIX IT, BUT I'VE BEEN FEELING UNDER THE WEATHER SINCE GETTING BACK FROM HIROSHIMA.

DON'T PUSH YOURSELF, OKAY?

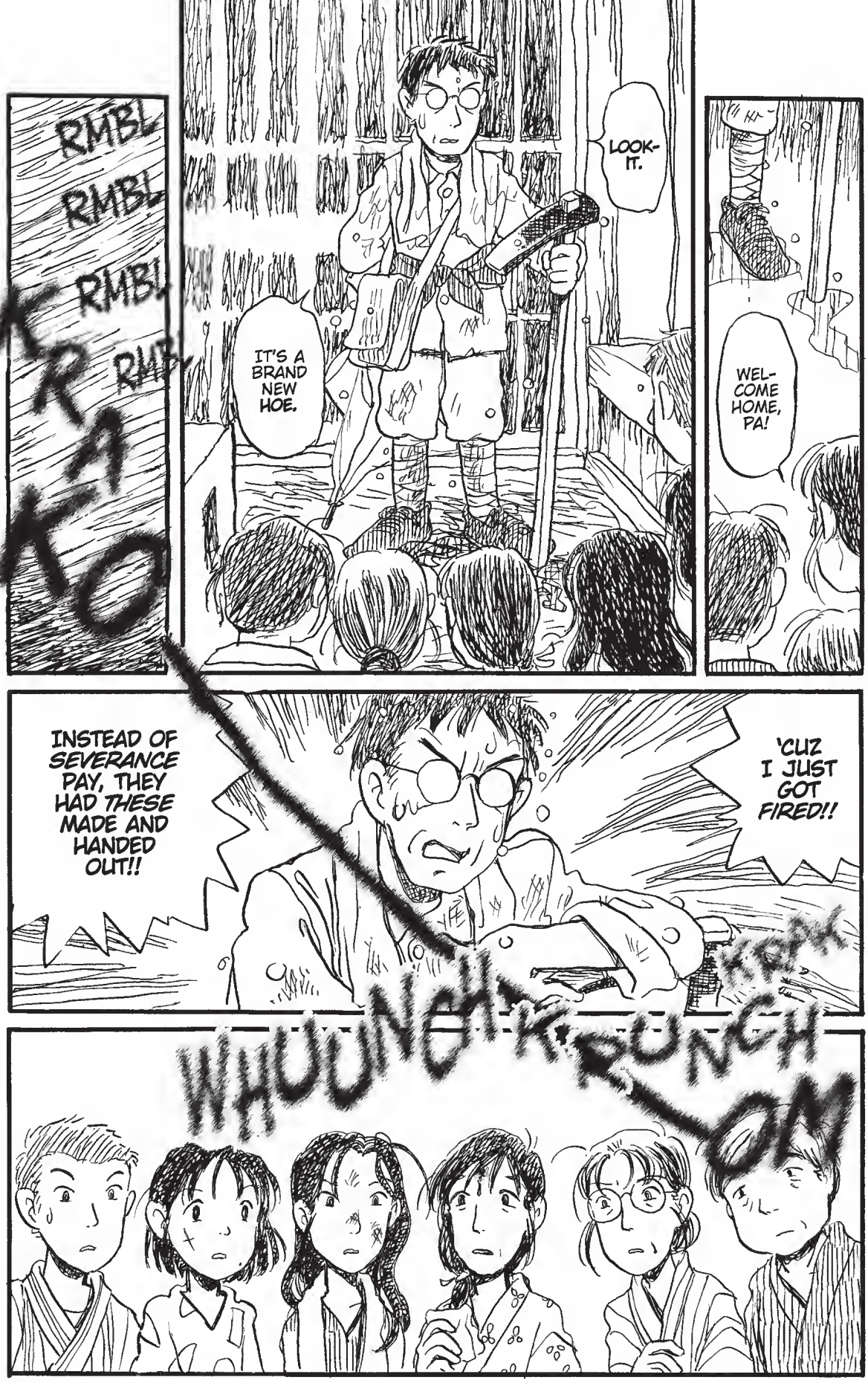
The Makurazaki Typhoon blew through the Hiroshima region September 17th and 18th, 1945. Considered one of the three most devastating typhoons in the Showa Era, it ripped across the wreckage of Hiroshima and Kure, destroying much of what had managed to survive the bombings. Over 2,400 people were killed by the storm, 254 of them in Kure.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?! THAT'S DANGER-OUS!
OH. WELCOME HOME.
HERE. LEMME LOOK AT IT.
THE TYPHOON OPENED UP THE HOLE IN THE ROOF FROM THE JULY BOMB-ING...
AH, WELCOME HOME, SHUSAKU.
WAH!!
ER... RIGHT. I'M HOME!
WE CAN ALWAYS DEPEND ON YOU.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!


COULD I ASK YOU TO PACK MY THINGS FOR A BUSINESS TRIP?
OH! WHEN ARE YOU LEAVING?
WHEN I CAME TO LOOK AT WHAT WAS DRIPPING, A CHUNK OF WOOD FELL AND HIT ME.
WHAT ?!
I'M SORRY! TRYIN' TO PATCH UP THE ONE HOLE, I MADE ANOTHER!
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
SAY, SUZU-SAN?
KRA-
BO
FP
WAH!
YEP. RUNNIN' AWAY.
HUH? BUT THAT SOUNDS LIKE--
AS SOON AS THEY LAND, I'M TO ACCOM-PANY MY SUPERIOR ON A TRIP..
NO IDEA. DEPENDS ON THE OCCUPA-TION FORCES.
OM
WAIT, NO.
A B-29 !!
I WONDER IF A HILLSIDE GAVE WAY...
LAMP... LAMP...!
.....

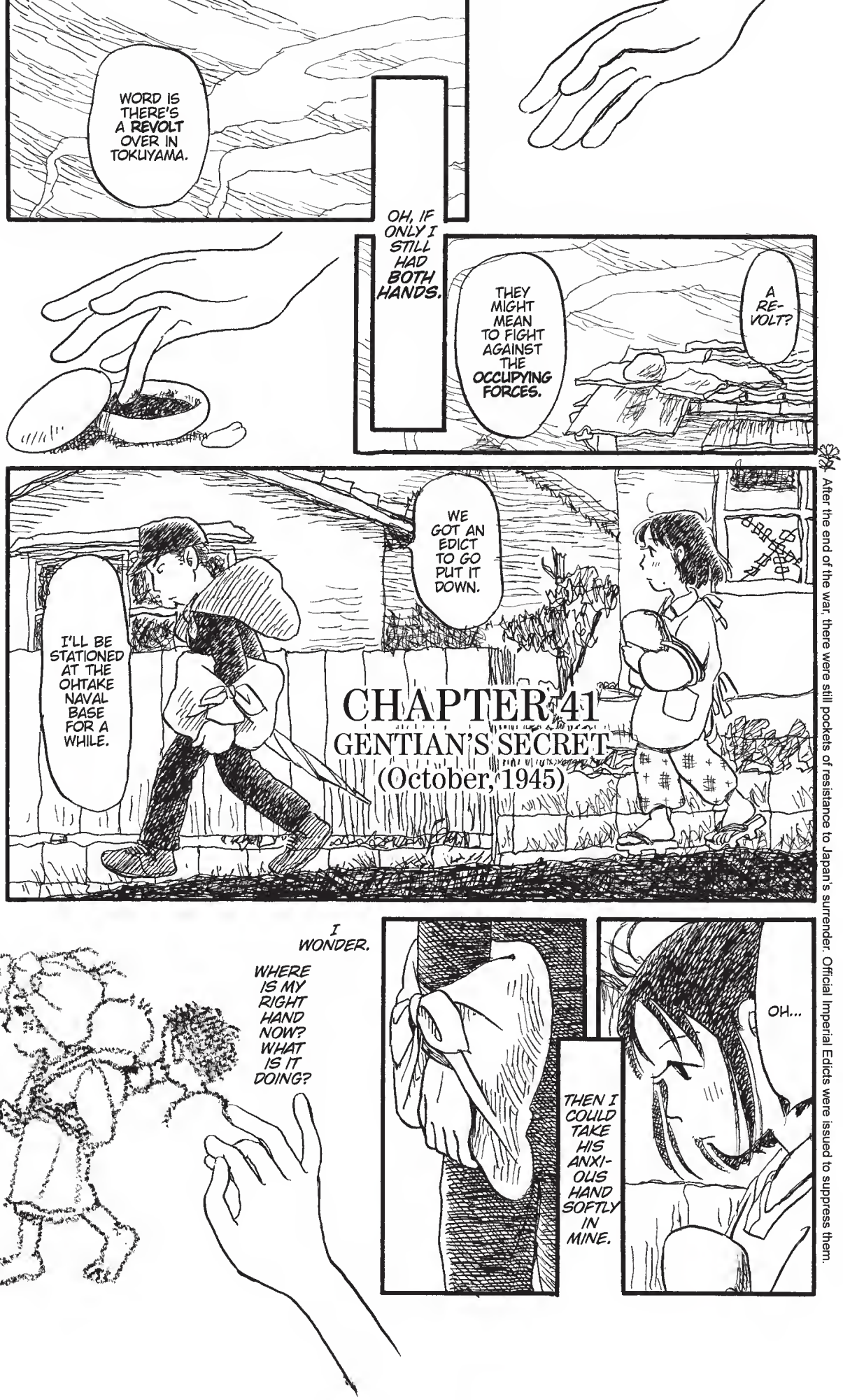

ELDER SISTER ?!
YOU'RE COVERED IN MUD! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
YOU AREN'T HURT, ARE YOU?
LET'S GET YOU WIPED OFF. I HAVE WATER WARMING, TOO.
.....
IS THIS THE HOJO HOUSE?
I HAVE MAIL FOR YOU.
HUH?
WHA --?
HOUSE ...?
?
HERE. A POST-CARD.
TH-THANK YOU FOR DELIVERING IT!!
IT'S SO SODDEN I CAN'T READ A WORD!!
I HATE TO ASK THIS OF YOU, BUT COULD YOU TAKE THIS TO THE KARIYAS?
HM ...?
A LAND-SLIDE'S GOT THE ROAD BLOCKED.
ER, I'VE PUT SOME TEA ON...
THANK YOU, BUT I HAVE MORE DELIVERIES WAITING.
GOOD DAY.

IT'S FINE ...
LAND-SLIDE ONLY HIT THE ROAD ...
MAIL CARRIERS SURE GOT IT ROUGH SOME DAYS.
YEAH. I'M WORRIED FOR THE KARIYAS, TOO.
YEP. THIS TIME IT'S BIG SIS. NO DOUBTING THAT.
SORRY!
BLAH
I ALMOST GET CAUGHT IN A LANDSLIDE. CLIMB UP A CLIFF TO GET HOME ONLY TO GET KICKED RIGHT OFF AT THE TOP...!
BLAH BLAH
BLAH BLAH
OH, WHAT A DAY TODAY'S BEEN.
YEEK!!
I'M HOME!
OH!
NAG NAG NAG
NOW IT'S JUST ENTARO WE'RE WAITING ON.


RMBL
RMBL
RMBL
RMBL
KR
A
KO
IT'S A BRAND NEW HOE.
LOOK-IT.
WEL-COME HOME, PA!
INSTEAD OF SEVERANCE PAY, THEY HAD THESE MADE AND HANDED OUT!!
'CUZ I JUST GOT FIRED!!
KRAK
WHUUNCH
RUNCH
ON

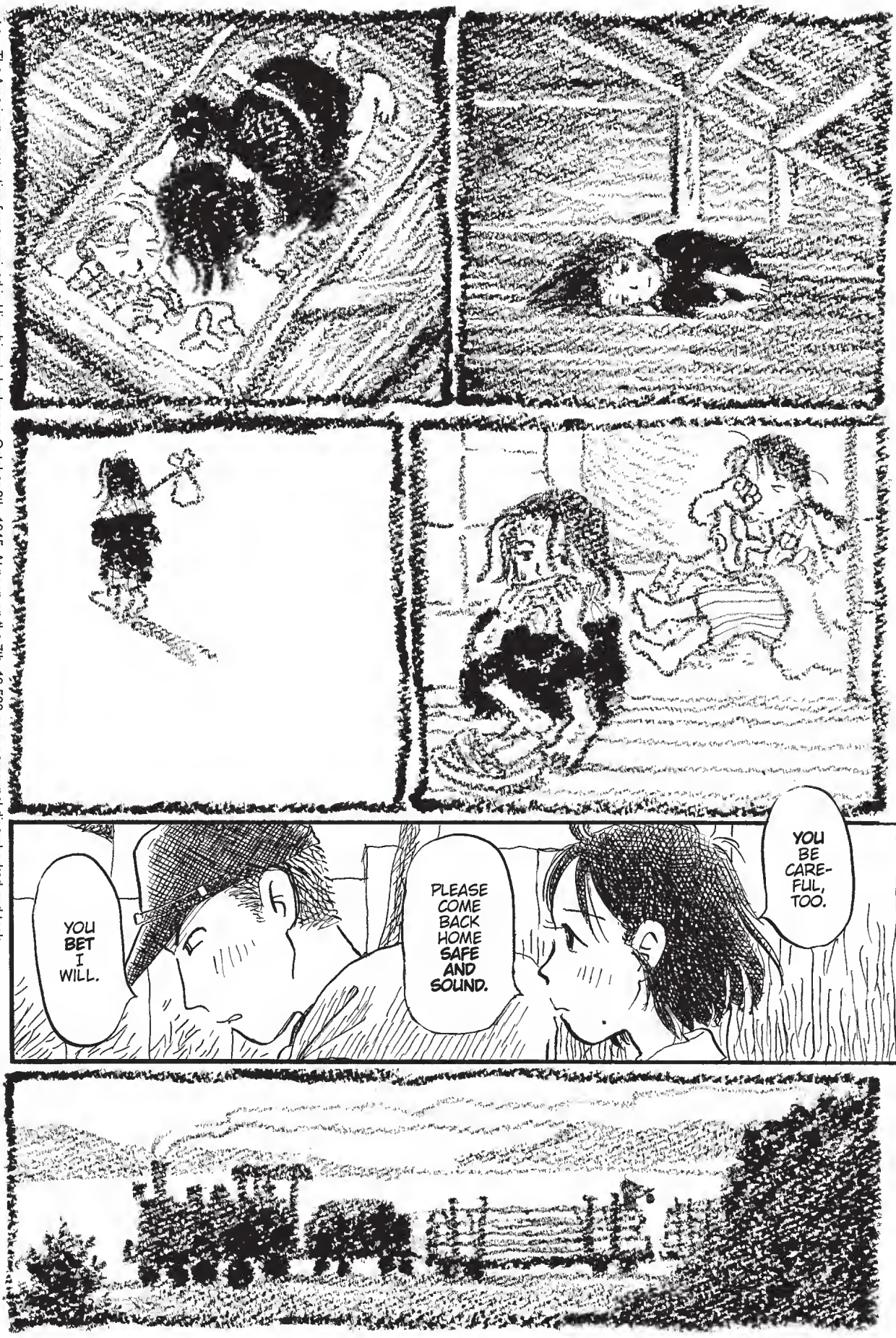
DID THAT SLIDE TAKE OUT THE SHED?
.....
Post Card
KURE CITY KAMINAGAYA
KYOTO
UH-OH.
WELL, THAT'S NO GOOD.
SUMI-CHAN.
SUMI-CHAN IS ALIVE.
Umeno Sumi
CAN'T TAKE SHELTER IF THE SHELTER JUST GOT BURIED.
WELP ...
HOOO
KRUMBL
KRUMBL
ER, PA? YOU KNOW THAT WAS EMBEZZLEMENT, RIGHT?
EVEN THE ROAD'S BEEN KNOCKED OUT.
NEVER MIND SHELTER.
PLISH PLISH
PLASH PLASH
WELL, SO SHE IS. IF YOU LOOK, THIS CARD CAME FROM KUSATSU.
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!

The only other time Japan faced the threat of invasion by a foreign power in its history was in the late 13th century, when the Mongols twice attempted to invade from the Korean peninsula. Both times the invading fleet was destroyed by a typhoon. These typhoons came to be described as "divine winds" sent by the gods to protect Japan. The word for "divine wind" in Japanese is *kami kaze*.

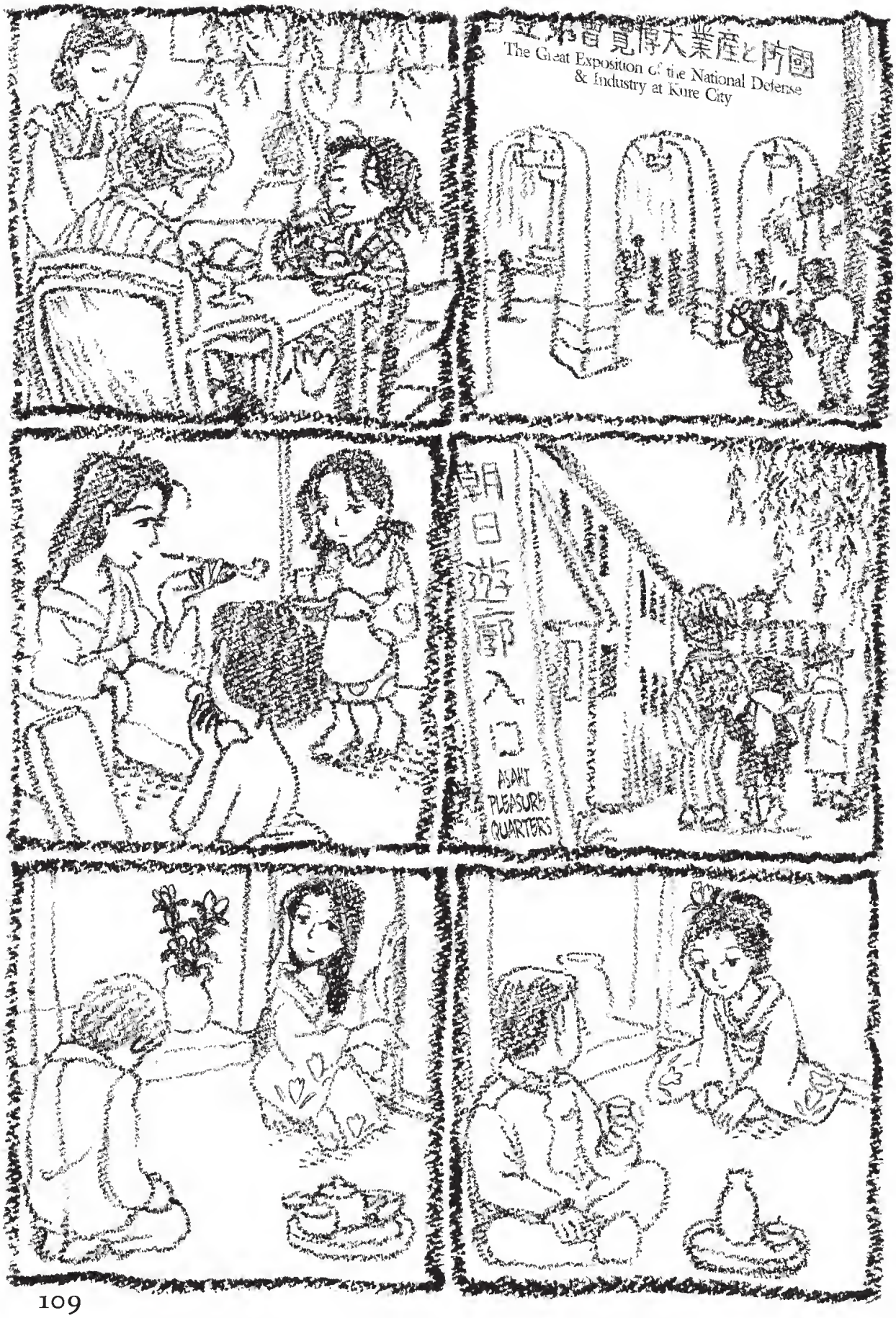


After the end of the war, there were still pockets of resistance to Japan's surrender. Official Imperial Edicts were issued to suppress them.

IT'S SO QUIET OUT TODAY.
YEP. EVERY-ONE'S WELL PRE-PARED.
ONCE YOU GET BACK HOME, DON'T SET FOOT OUTSIDE FOR NOTH-ING.
HEAR?
I WON'T.



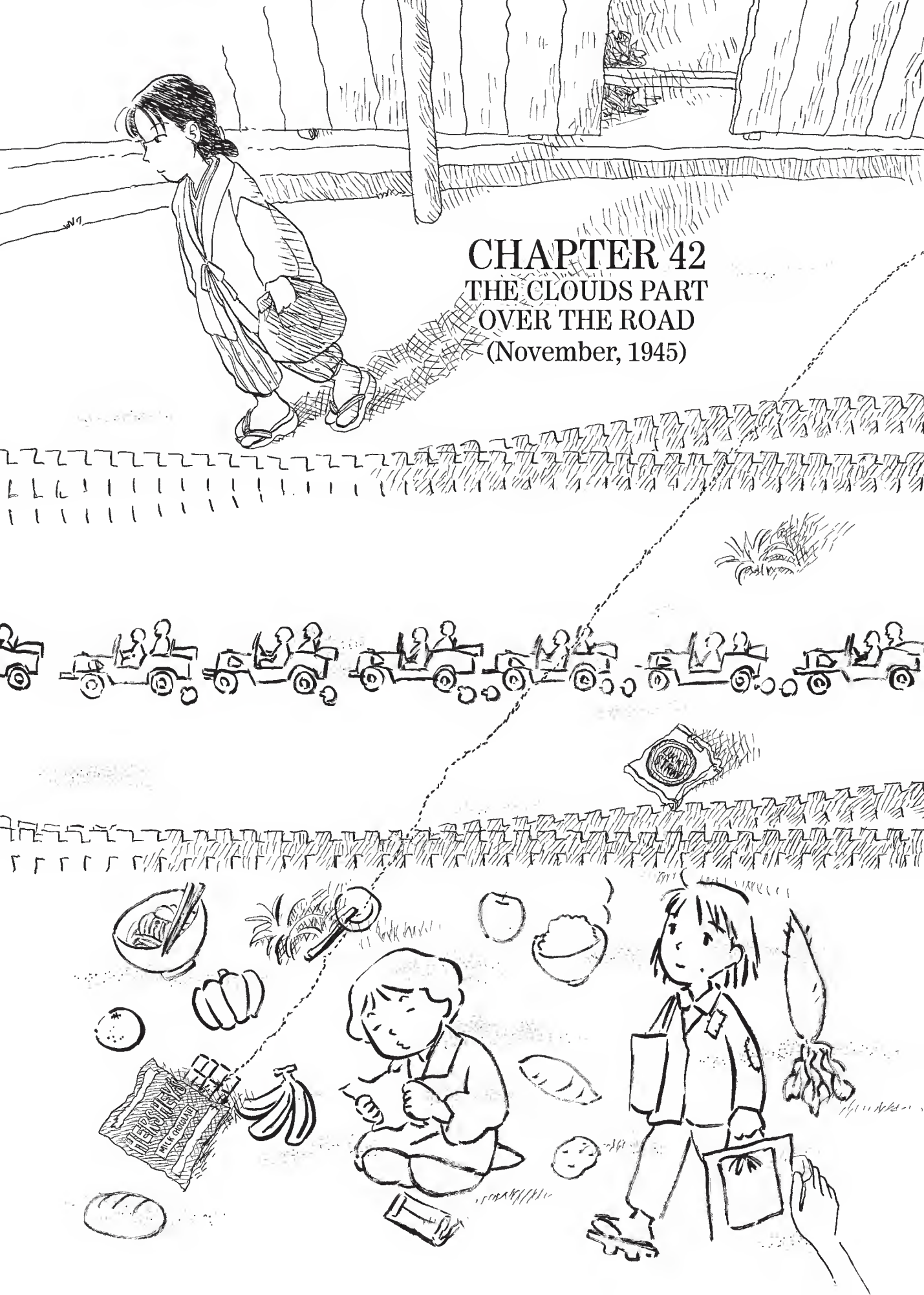
The American occupation forces arrived in Hiroshima's harbor on October 6th, 1945. At noon on the 7th, 19,500 navy personnel disembarked and took up quarters in the Kure region. The Japanese residents, fearing attack by the soldiers, stayed locked inside their homes or evacuated the city entirely.


The Great Exposition of the National Defense & Industry at Kure City
朝日遊廓入口
ASAHI PLEASURE QUARTERS

STAY SAFE.
ALL RIGHT, THEN. I'LL SEE YOU LATER.
THANKS. THIS IS FAR ENOUGH.
I'M SURE YOU KNOW, BUT YOU TAKE A *LEFT* AT THE SECOND CORNER THERE.
GO HAVE A LOOK FOR YOURSELF...
'FORE THE OCCUPYING ARMY GETS HERE.
R-RIGHT ...
QUICK, NOW!

"ANY SECRETS THEY HAD DISAPPEAR LIKE THEY NEVER HAPPENED.
"WHEN FOLK DIE, THEY TAKE THEIR MEMORIES WITH THEM.
"THAT SEEMS LIKE ITS OWN KIND OF LUXURY...
"DOESN'T IT?"

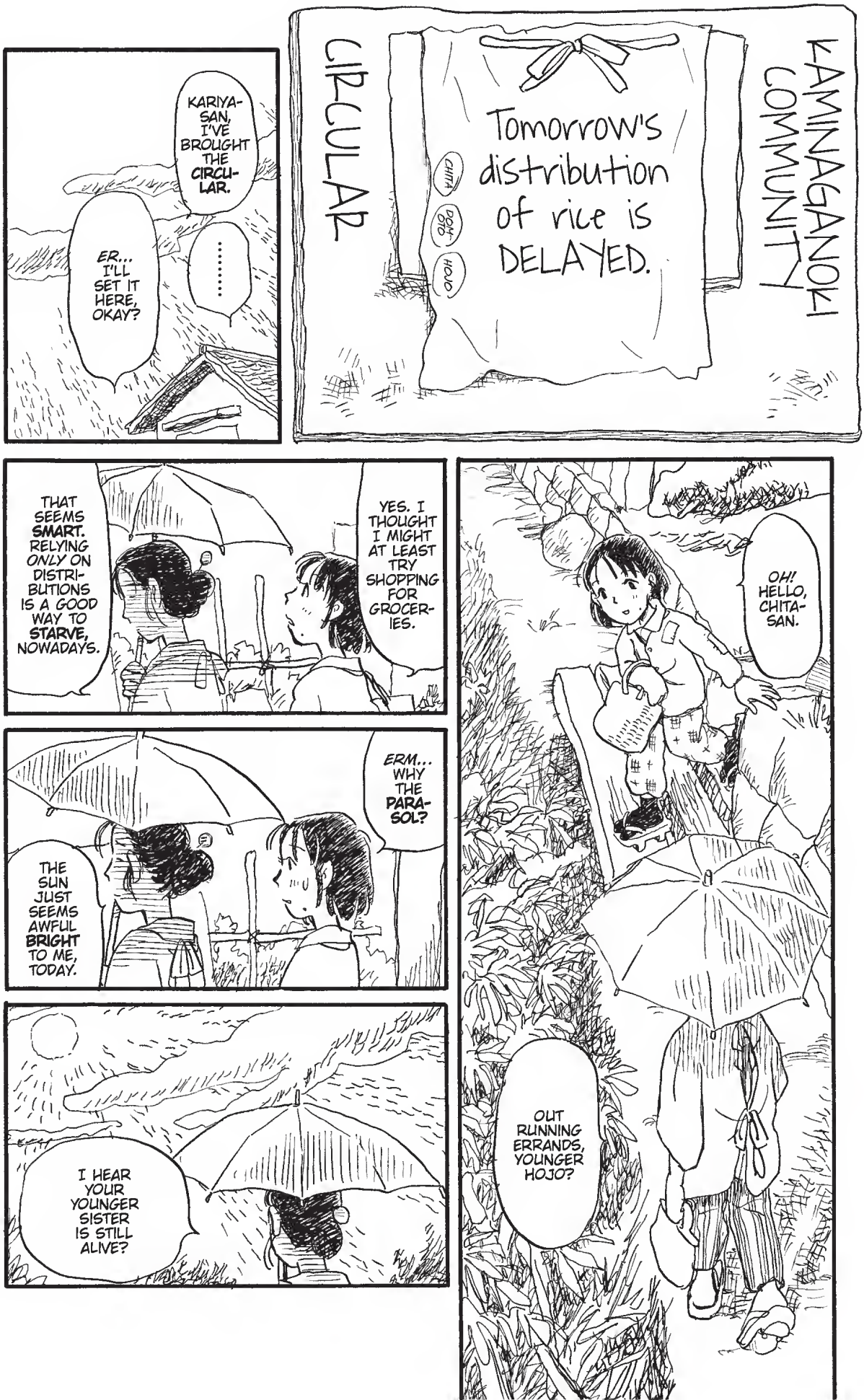
I MADE YOU NOT A SECRET ANYMORE.
I'M SORRY, RIN-SAN.
BUT YOU KNOW? THAT SEEMS LIKE ITS OWN KIND OF LUXURY, TOO...



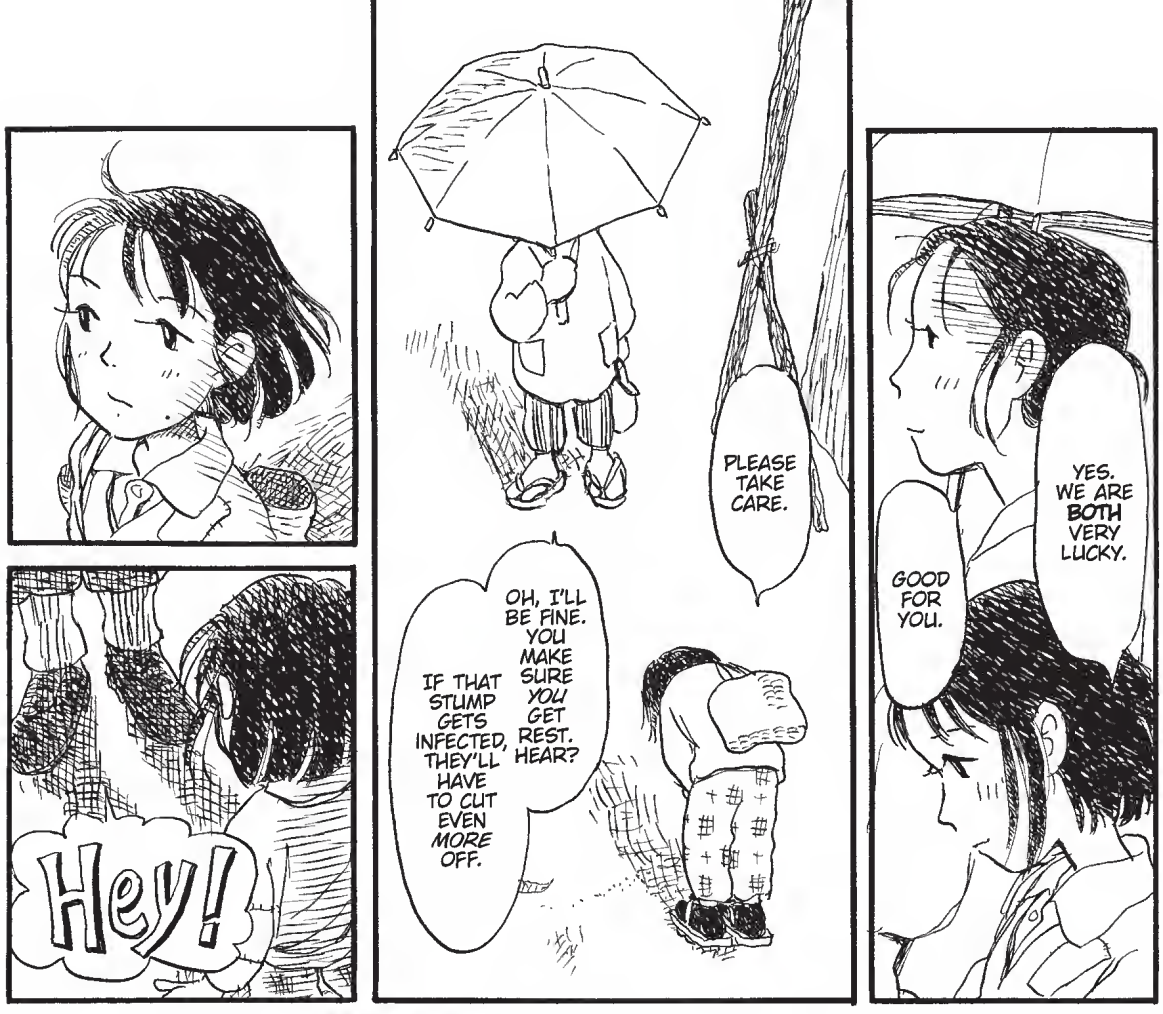
CHAPTER 42

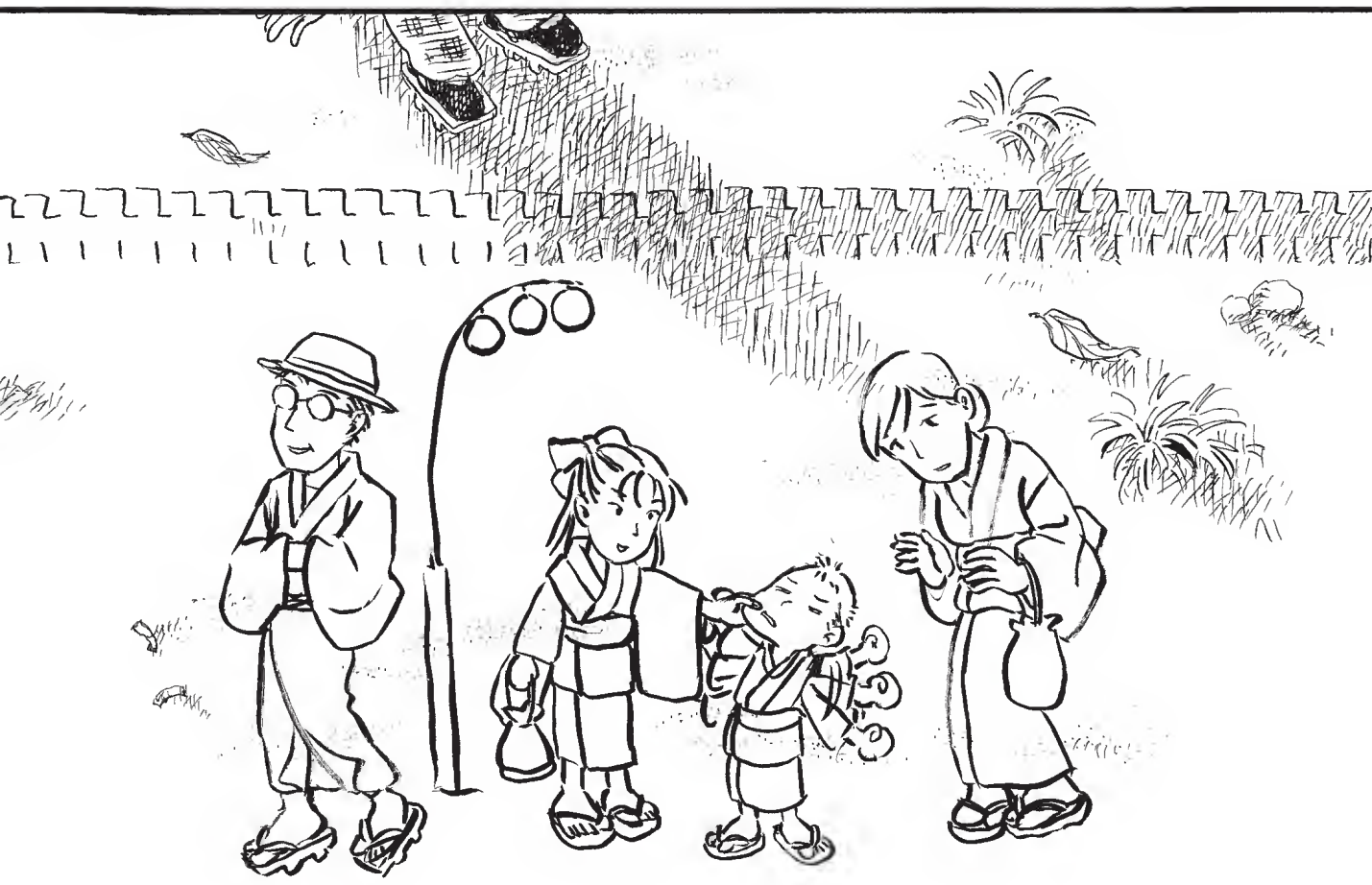
THE CLOUDS PART OVER THE ROAD

(November, 1945)



Thanks to crop failures and typhoon damage to roads, Kure's already poor food supply dropped to near famine levels after the end of the war.

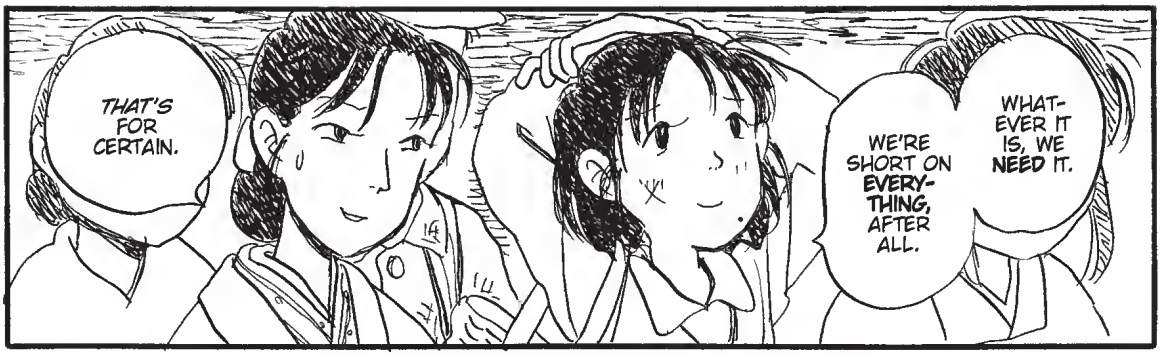

Hey!
IF THAT STUMP GETS INFECTED, THEY'LL HAVE TO CUT EVEN MORE OFF.
OH, I'LL BE FINE. YOU MAKE SURE YOU GET REST. HEAR?
PLEASE TAKE CARE.
GOOD FOR YOU.
YES. WE ARE BOTH VERY LUCKY.

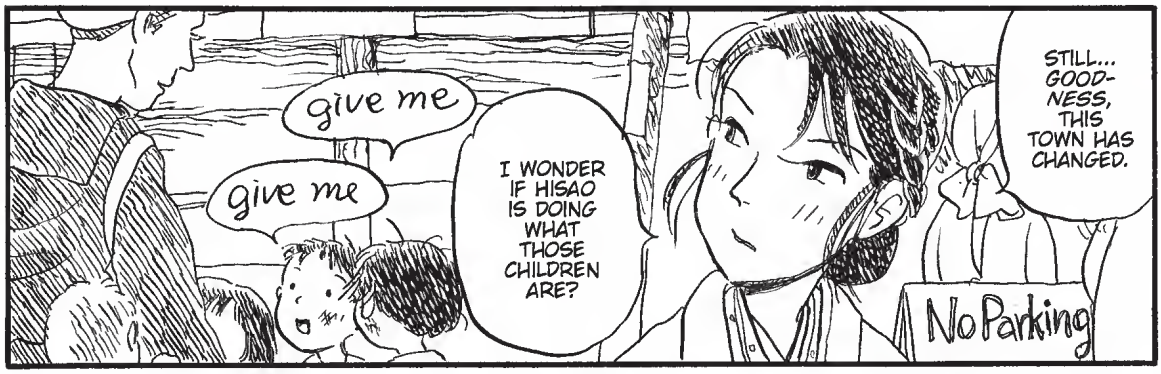


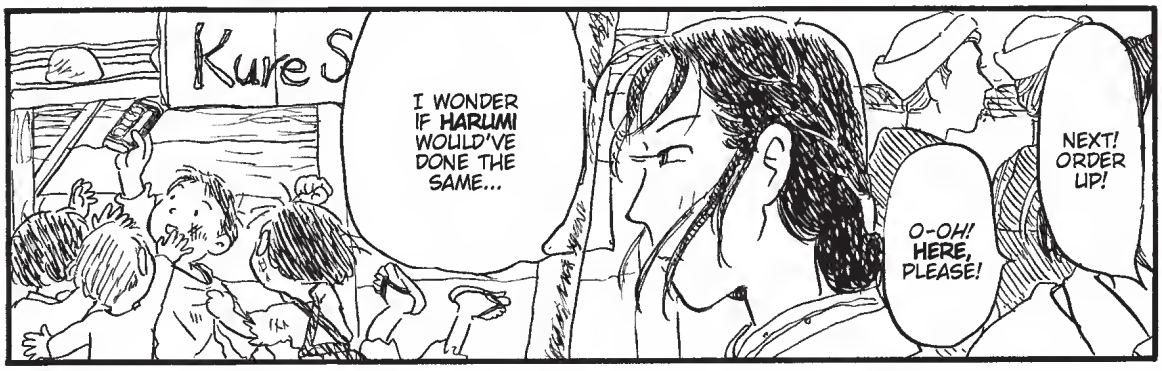
國防と産業大博覽會
THE GREAT EXPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE & INDUSTRY AT KURE CITY
市呉催主
THE "GREAT EXPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE & INDUSTRY" AT KURE CITY WAS HELD IN THE SPRING OF '39 WITH OVER 700,000 PEOPLE ATTENDING. IT WAS CONSIDERED A SMASHING SUCCESS.

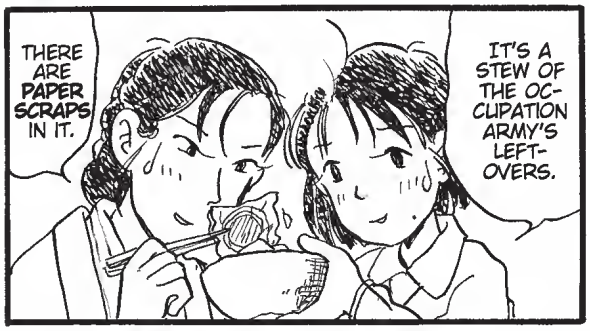
北條
HOJO
Hey everyone, I will be in Onto Please send word

NO IDEA.
SUZU-SAN. WHAT IS THIS LINE FOR?
OH. ELDER SISTER.
日賣切
SoldOut
arket

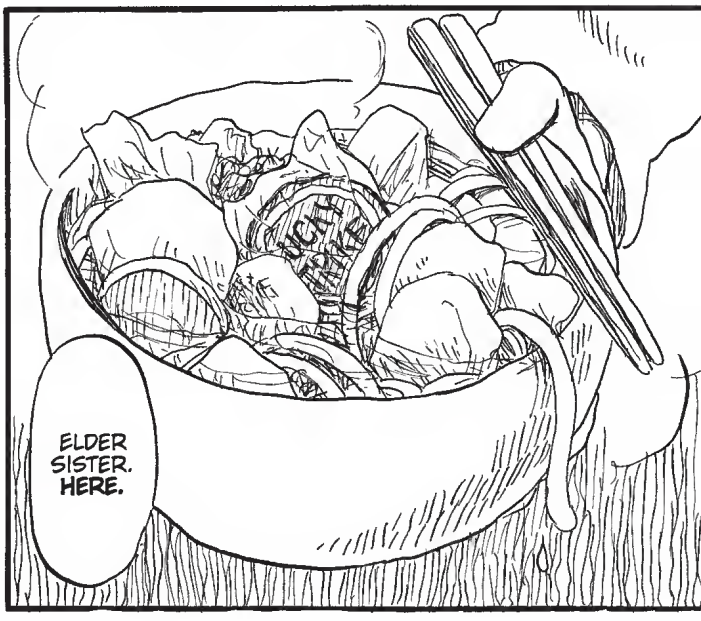

THAT'S FOR CERTAIN.
WE'RE SHORT ON EVERY-THING, AFTER ALL.
WHAT-EVER IT IS, WE NEED IT.


give me
give me
I WONDER IF HISAO IS DOING WHAT THOSE CHILDREN ARE?
STILL... GOOD-NESS, THIS TOWN HAS CHANGED.
No Parking

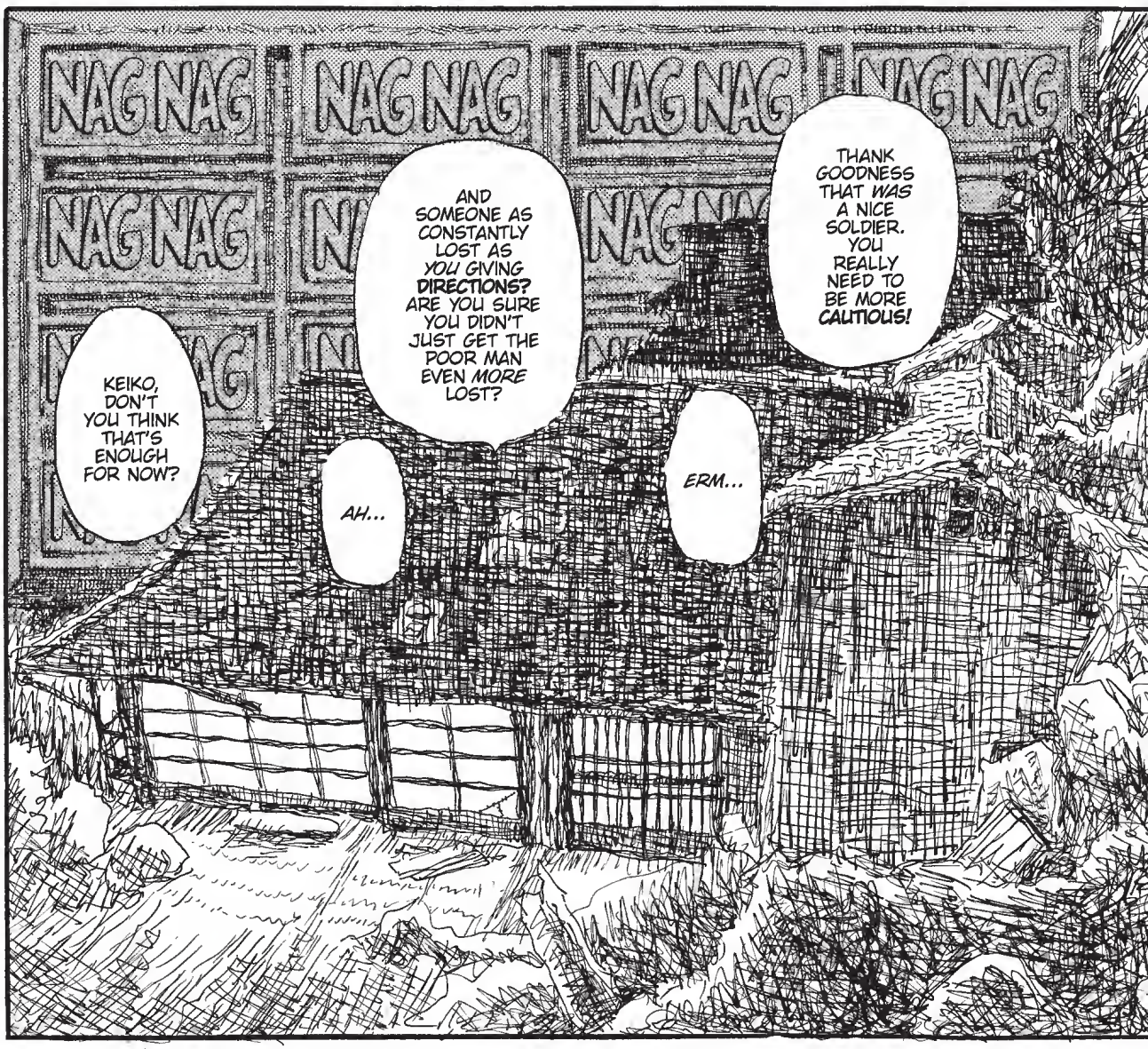

I WONDER IF HARUMI WOULD'VE DONE THE SAME...
NEXT! ORDER UP!
O-OH! HERE, PLEASE!


THERE ARE PAPER SCRAPS IN IT.
IT'S A STEW OF THE OC-CUPATION ARMY'S LEFT-OVERS.

.....
.....

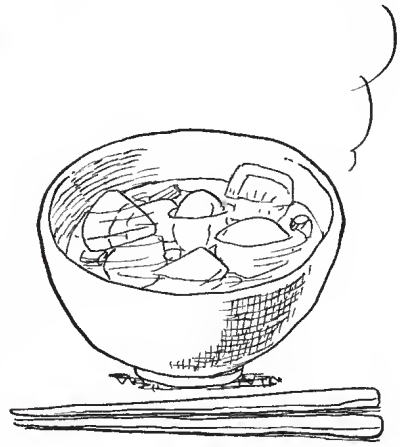

ELDER SISTER. HERE.

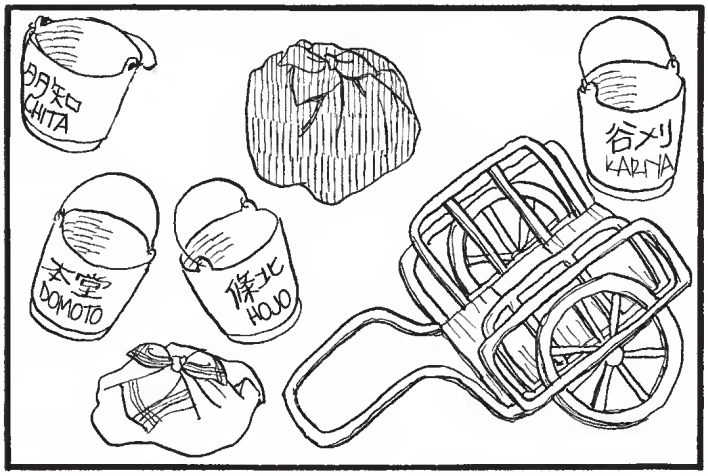
Welcome
Market
Daikuro
Sold Out
Yum—
Seafood
AH

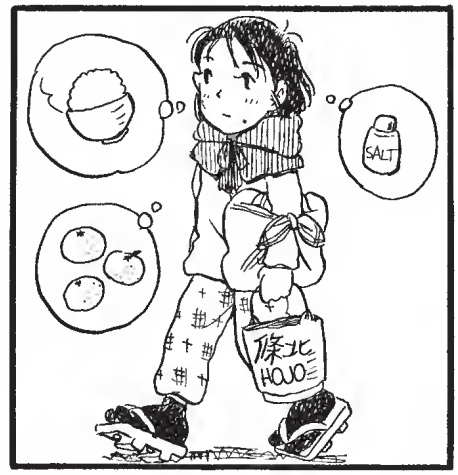


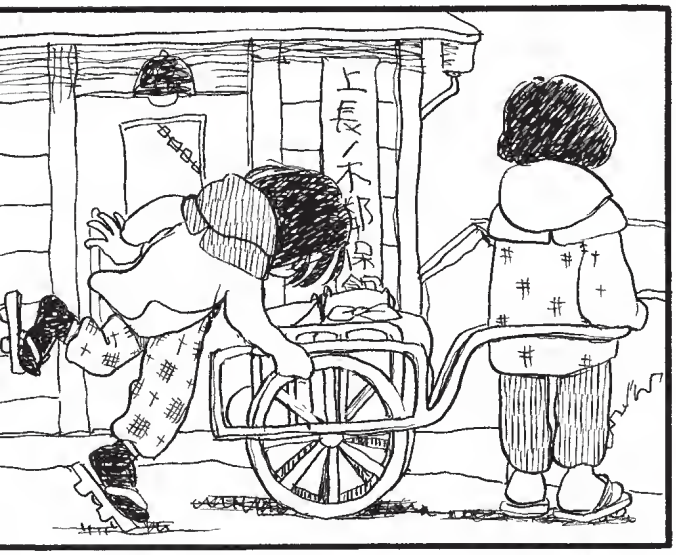
Though the U.S. Army was the first to occupy Kure after the war, they handed over control of the Chugoku and Shikoku regions (which included Hiroshima) to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) in February of 1946. The BCOF was a joint force of the British, Australian, Indian, and New Zealand armies. Over thirty thousand BCOF troops landed in Kure.

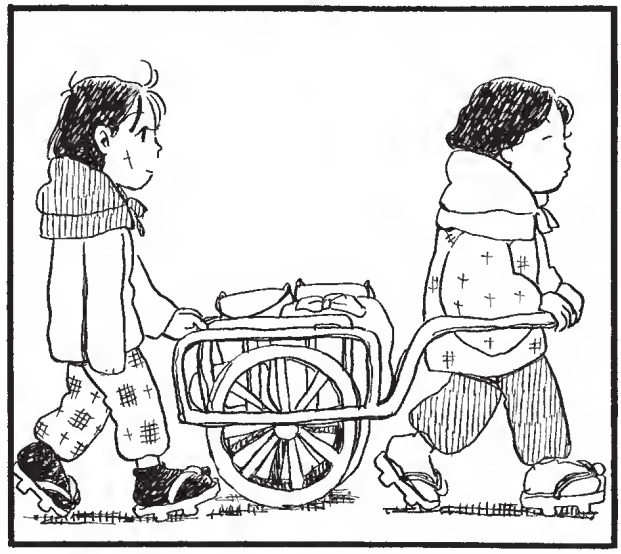
CHAPTER 43
OF HERONS AND NEW LEAVES
(December, 1945)





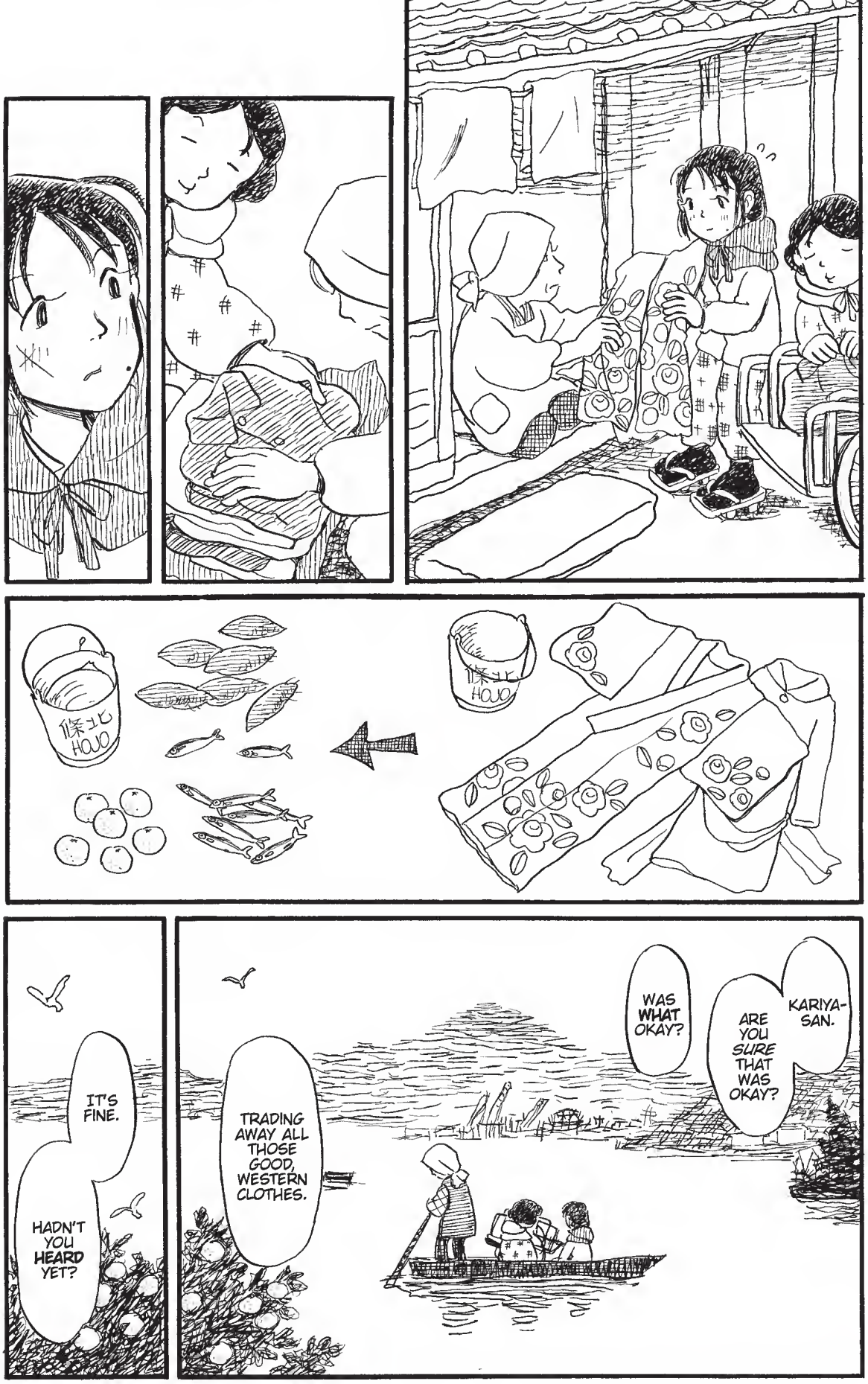


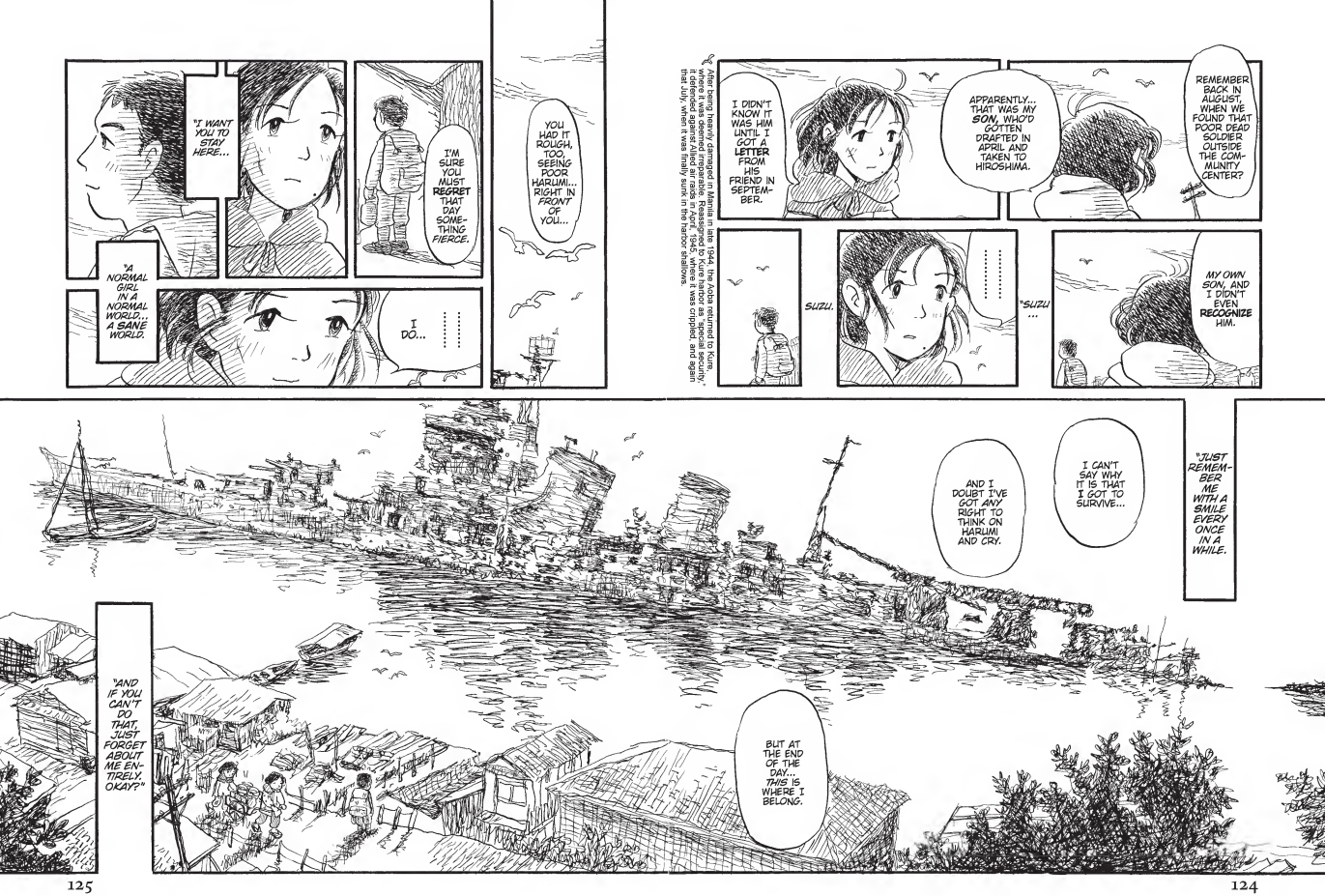




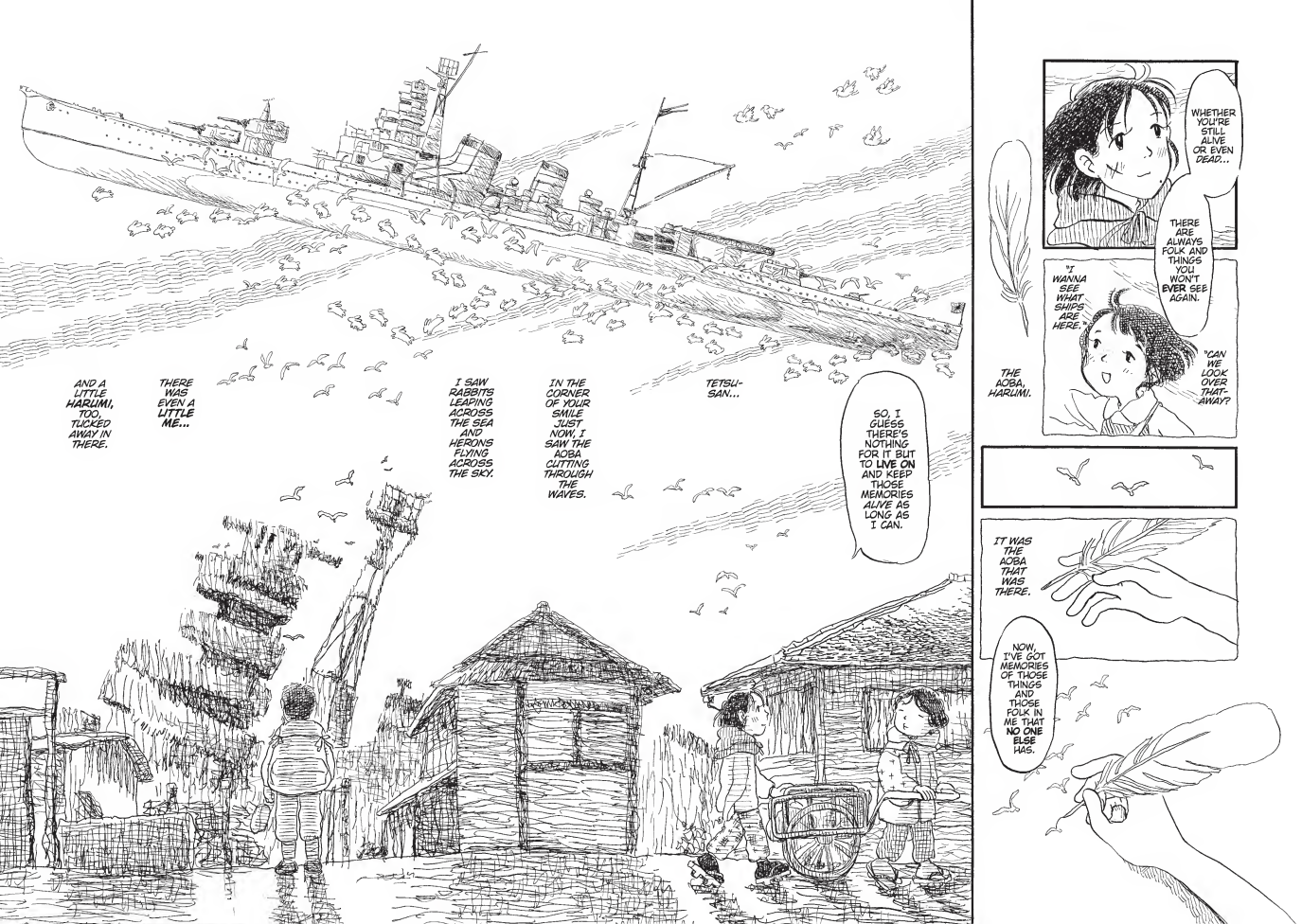
Banner: Kaminaganoki Community Center

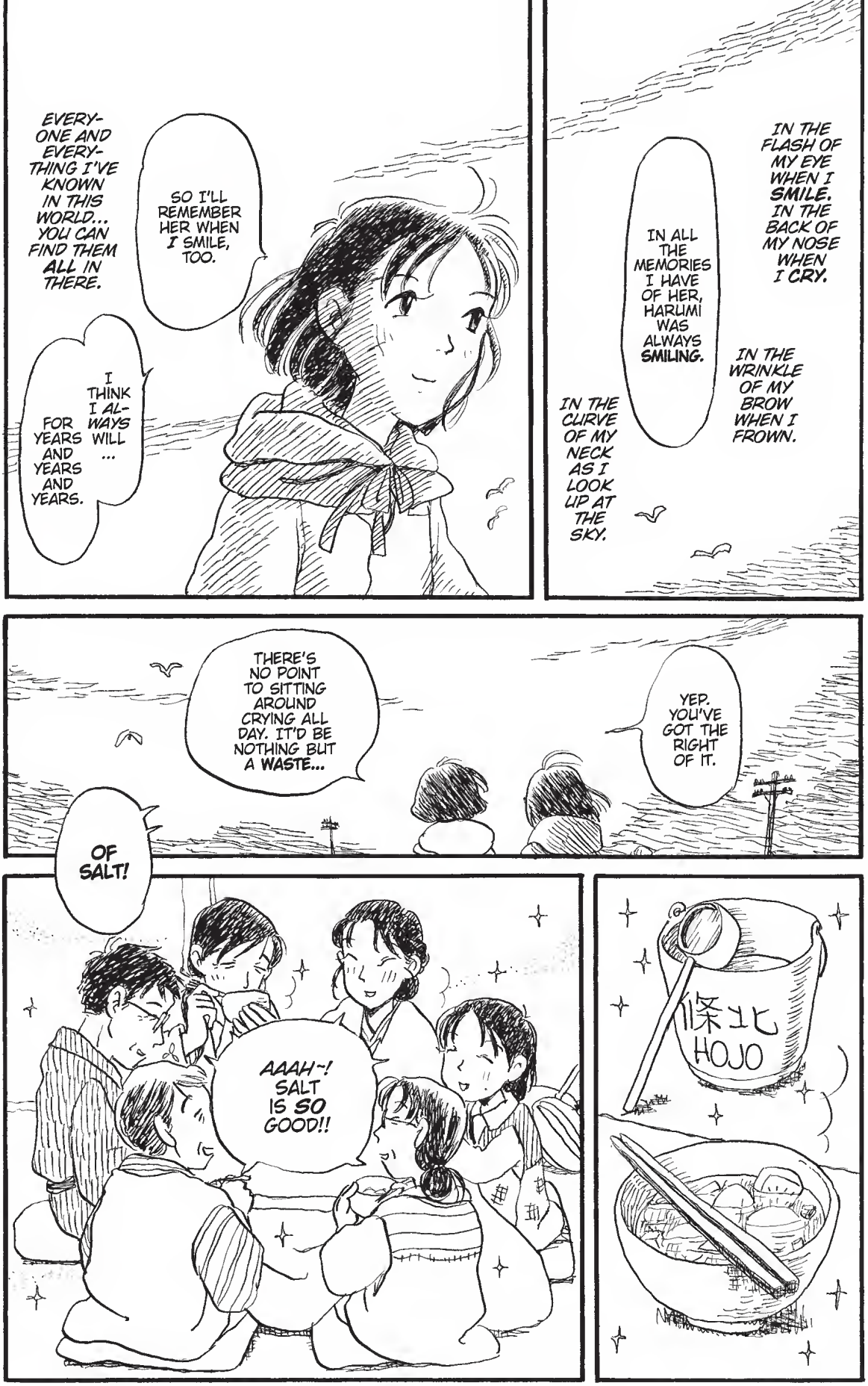
* 1 sho is about 0.5 gallons/1.89 liters, while 1 kin is about 1.32 pounds/600 grams.


KARIYA-SAN.
ARE YOU SURE THAT WAS OKAY?
WAS WHAT OKAY?
TRADING AWAY ALL THOSE GOOD, WESTERN CLOTHES.
IT'S FINE.
HADN'T YOU HEARD YET?



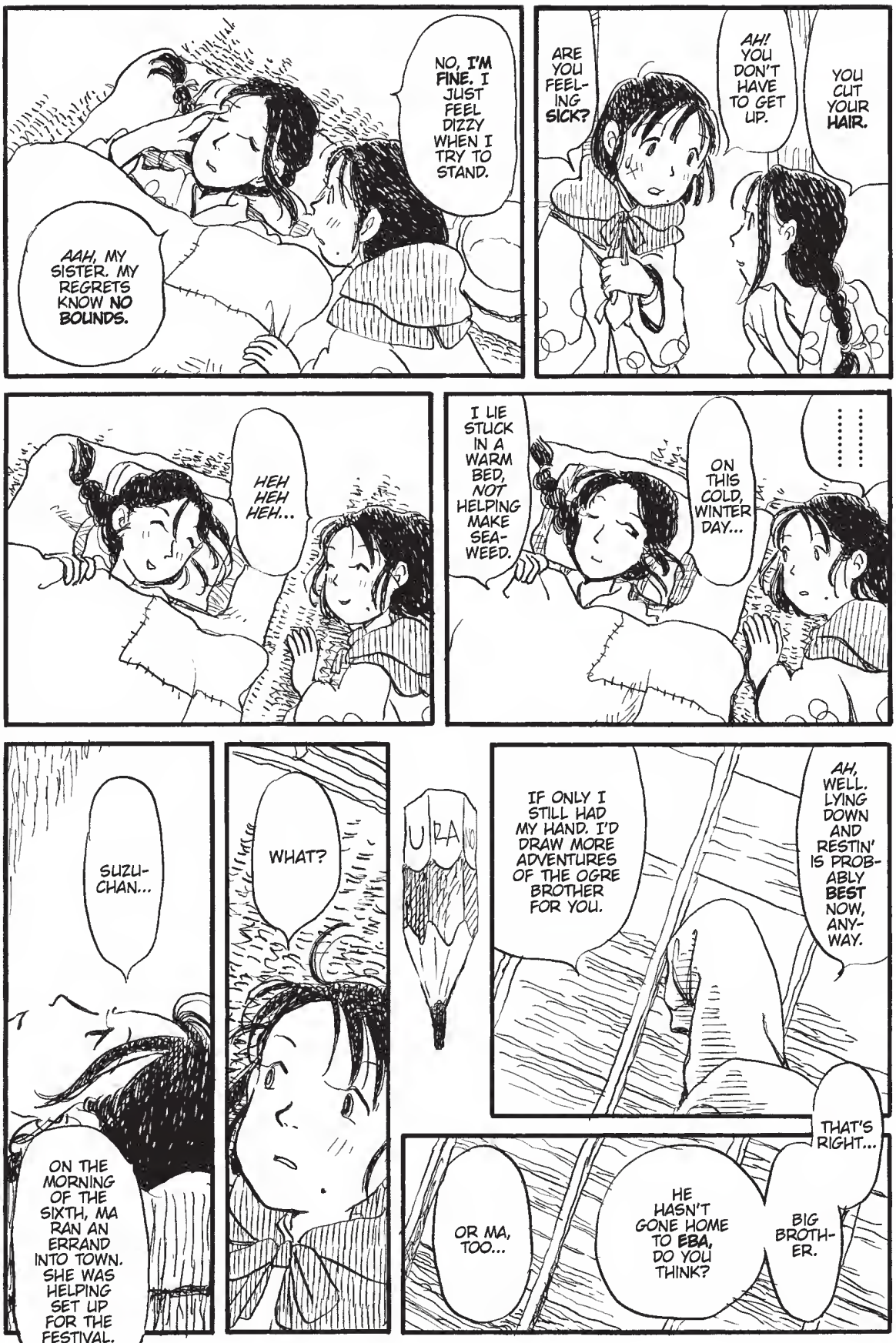
After being heavily damaged in Manila in late 1944, the Aoba returned to Kure, where it was repaired and refitted. It was sunk by air attack on July 28, 1945, while it was supposedly being defended against Allied air raids in April, 1945, where it was crippled, and again that July, when it was finally sunk in the harbor shallows.


AND A LITTLE HARUMI, TOO, TUCKED AWAY IN THERE.
THERE WAS EVEN A LITTLE ME...
I SAW RABBITS LEAPING ACROSS THE SEA AND HERONS FLYING ACROSS THE SKY.
IN THE CORNER OF YOUR SMILE JUST NOW, I SAW THE AOBA CUTTING THROUGH THE WAVES.
TETSU-SAN...
SO, I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING FOR IT BUT TO LIVE ON AND KEEP THOSE MEMORIES ALIVE AS LONG AS I CAN.
WHETHER YOU'RE STILL ALIVE OR EVEN DEAD...
THERE ARE ALWAYS FOLK AND THINGS YOU WON'T EVER SEE AGAIN.
"I WANNA SEE WHAT SHIPS ARE HERE."
"CAN WE LOOK OVER THAT-AWAY?
THE AOBA, HARUMI.
IT WAS THE AOBA THAT WAS THERE.
NOW, I'VE GOT MEMORIES OF THOSE THINGS AND THOSE FOLK IN ME THAT NO ONE ELSE HAS.

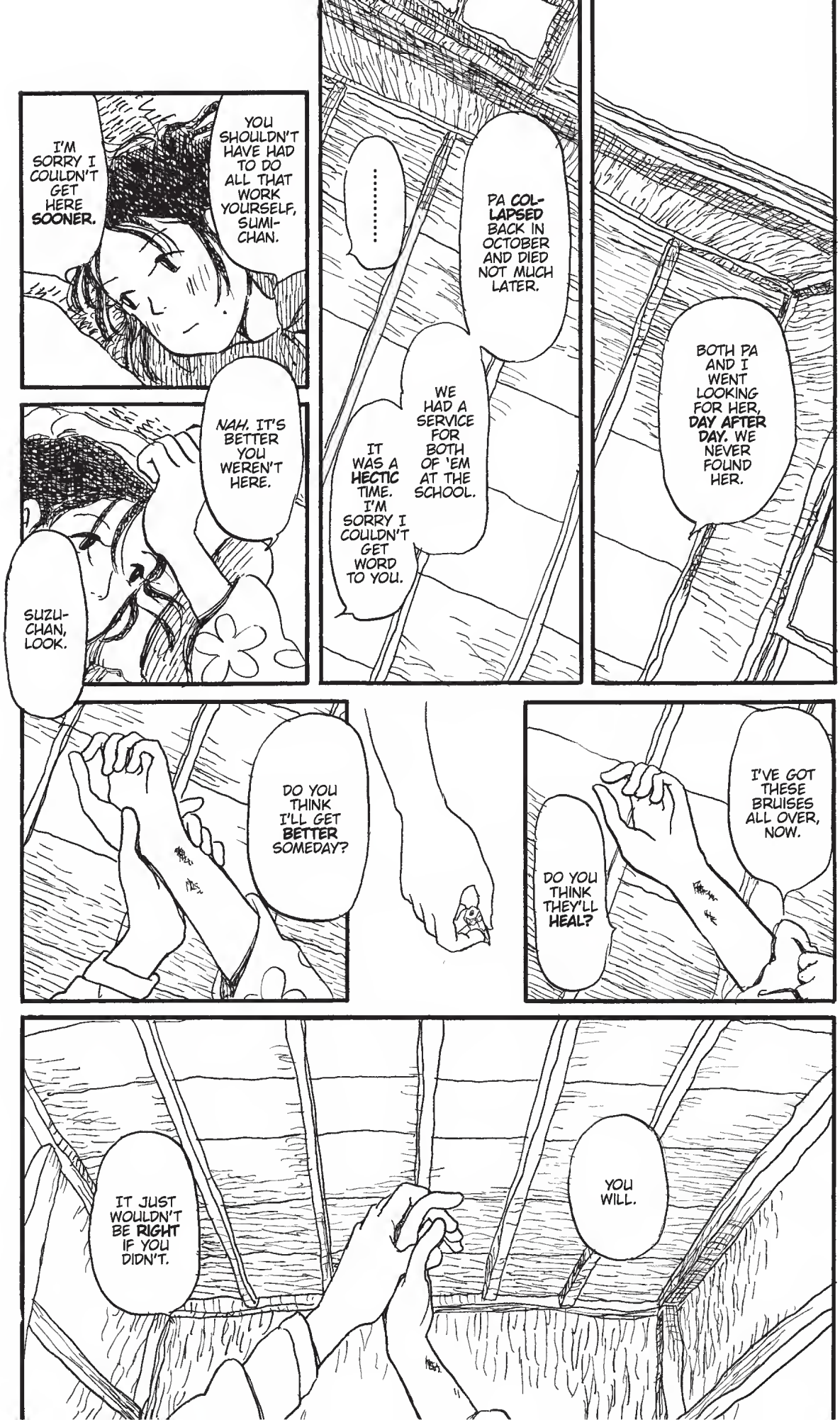


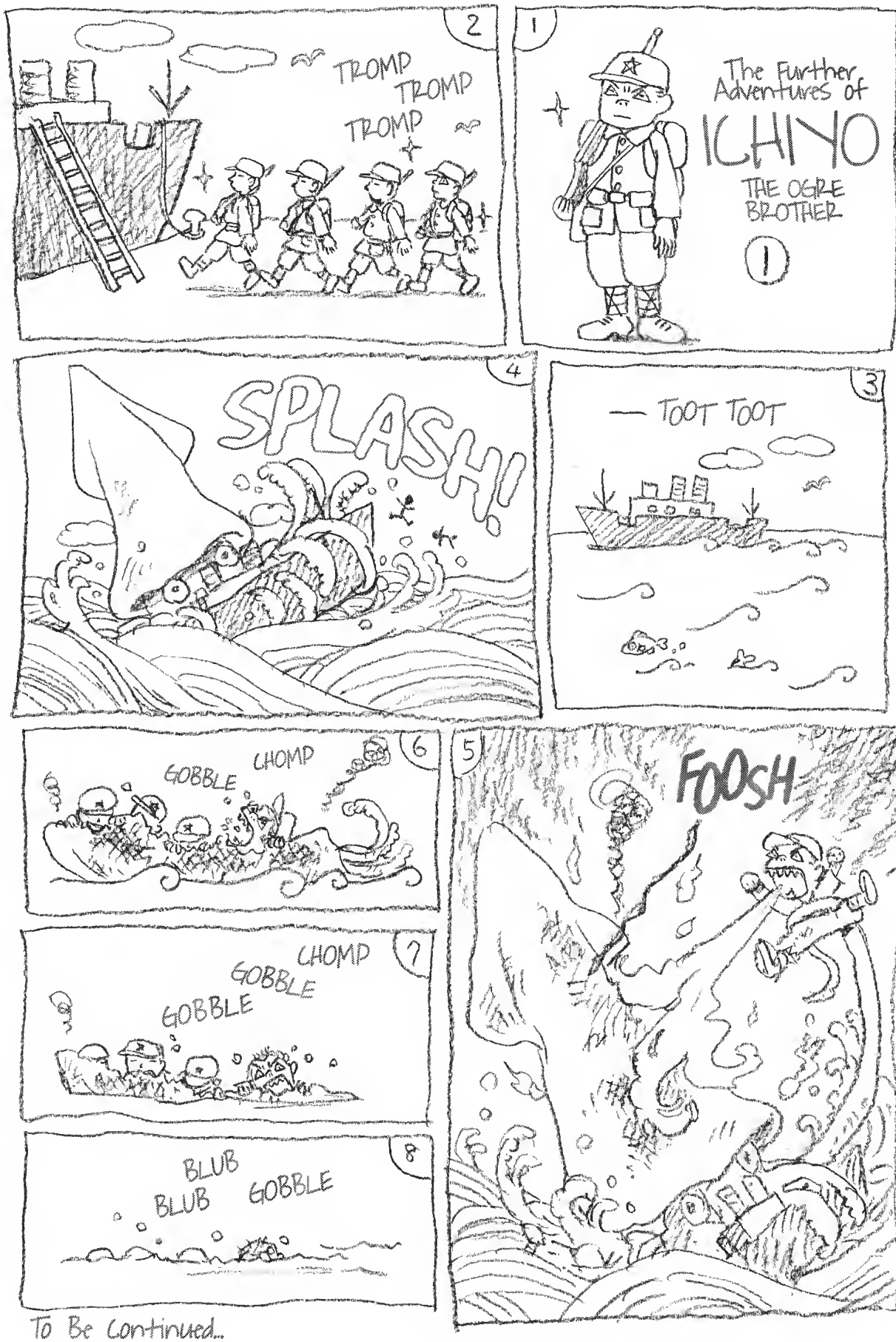
In the closing years of the war and for several afterwards, Japan faced not only a severe food shortage, but also a shortage of salt and spices. It was so bad people resorted to using seawater to salt their dishes. One newspaper even ran an article that outlined a method for extracting salt from urine...

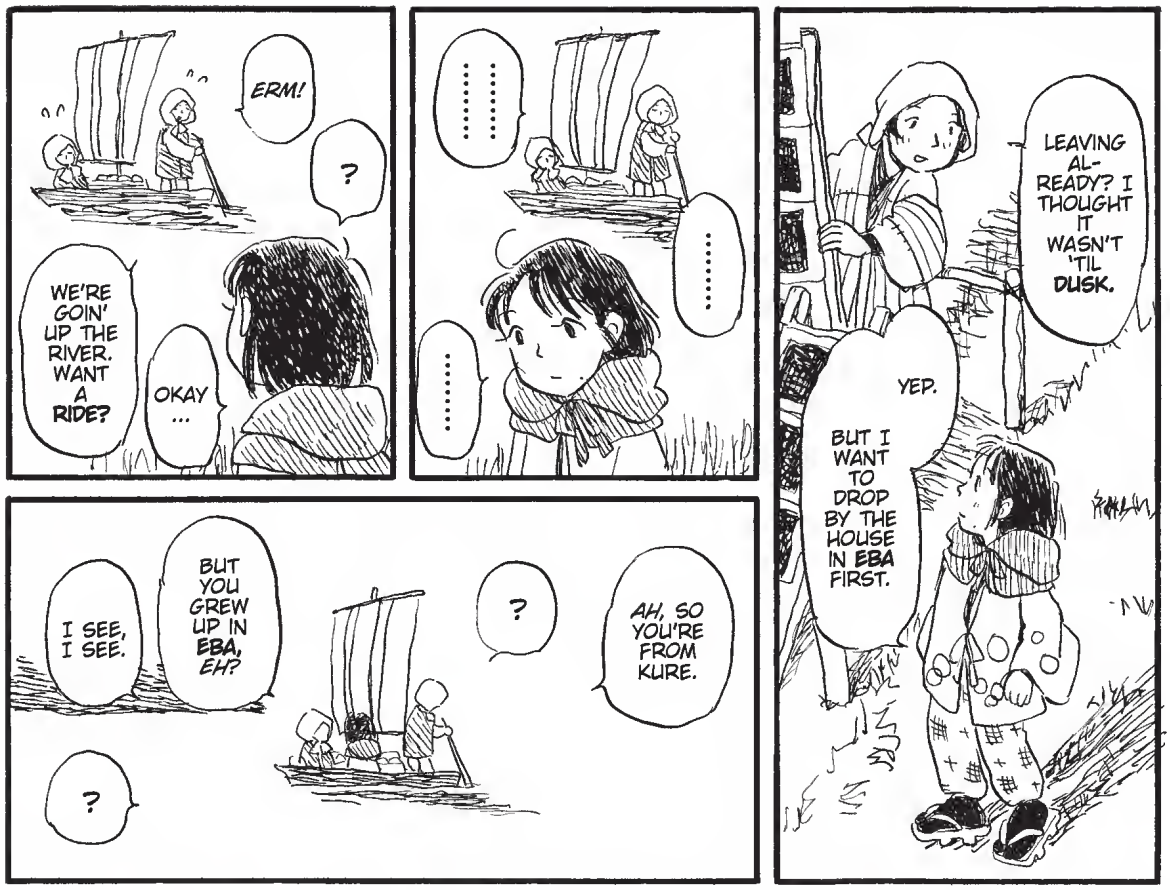
CHAPTER 44
THE TOWN WHERE THEY WAIT
(January, 1946)
MY, MY! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, SUZU-CHAN.
DOES YOUR HAND NOT HURT ANY-MORE?
YOU MUST'VE BEEN CRAMPED IN THAT FULL TRAIN.
GRANNY. AUNTIE. CHIZUKO-CHAN.
YOU'RE ALL SAFE.
OKAY!
SUMI-CHAN IS IN THE HOUSE. HURRY AND SAY HELLO TO HER.
SUZU-CHAN!
SUMI-CHAN?

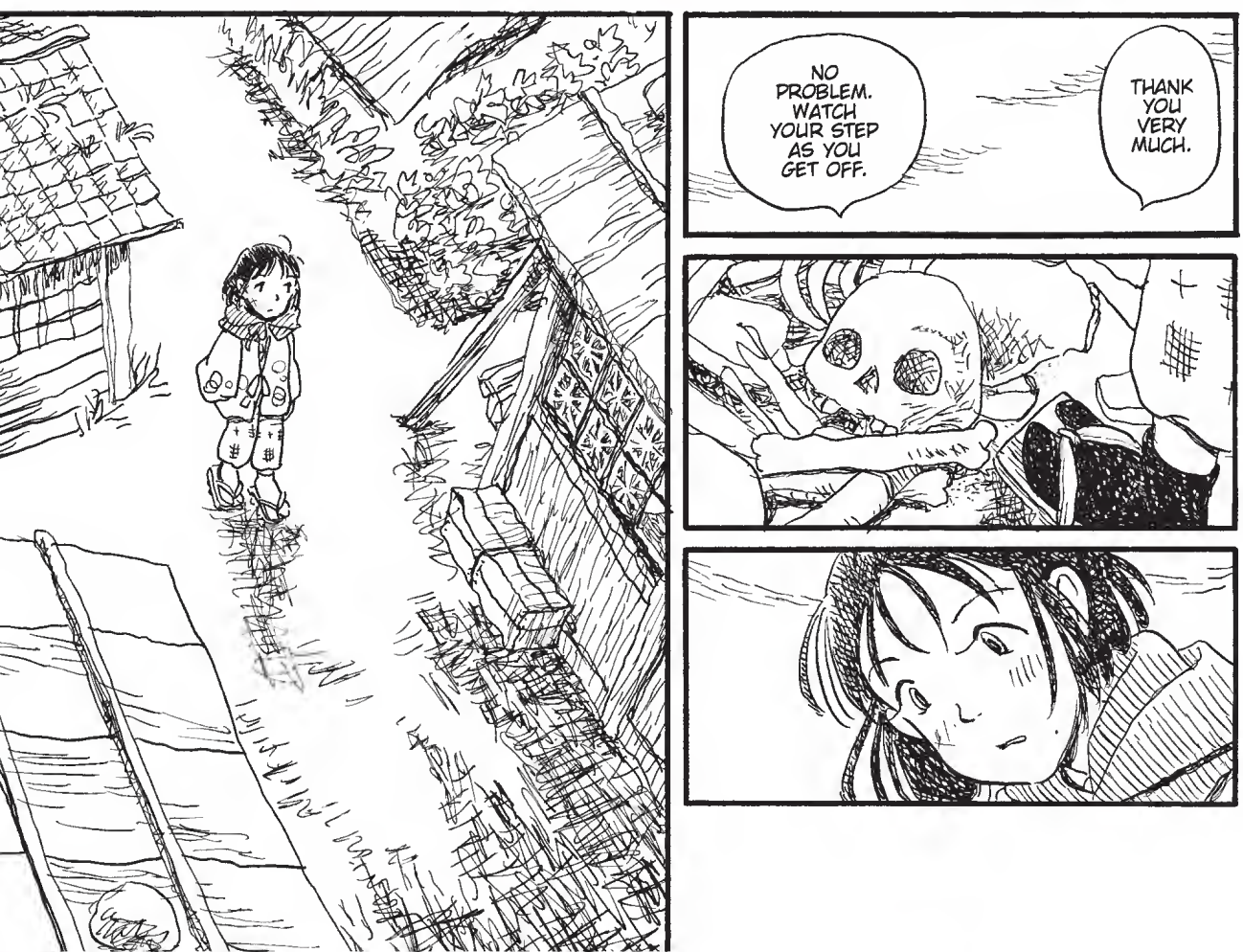


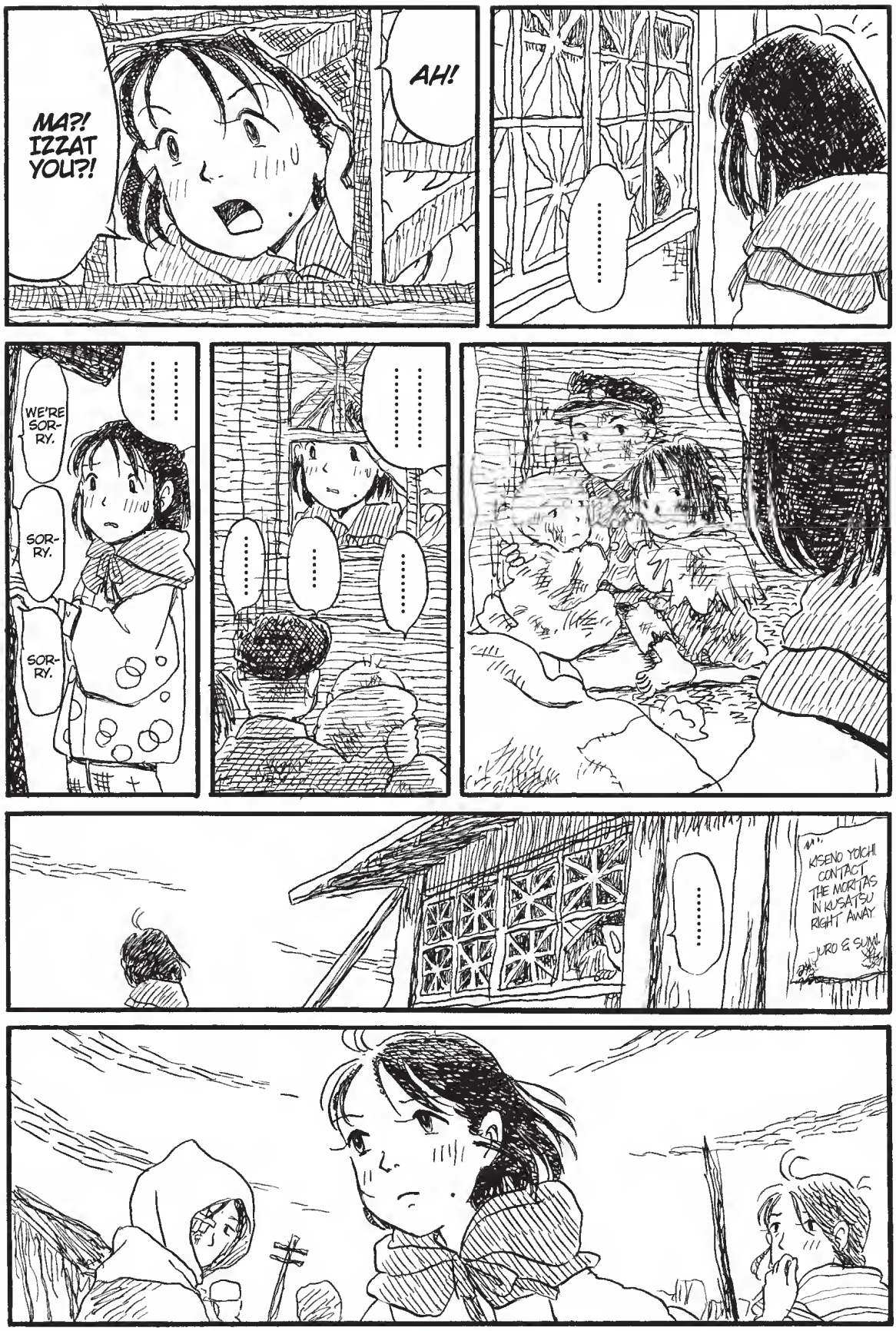
Kusatsu, located 4.5 kilometers from the hypocenter in Hiroshima, was almost completely unaffected by the blast. Eba, which was 3.5 kilometers away, had some damage to its buildings, but that was all. Both communities opened their homes and took in victims of the bombing.

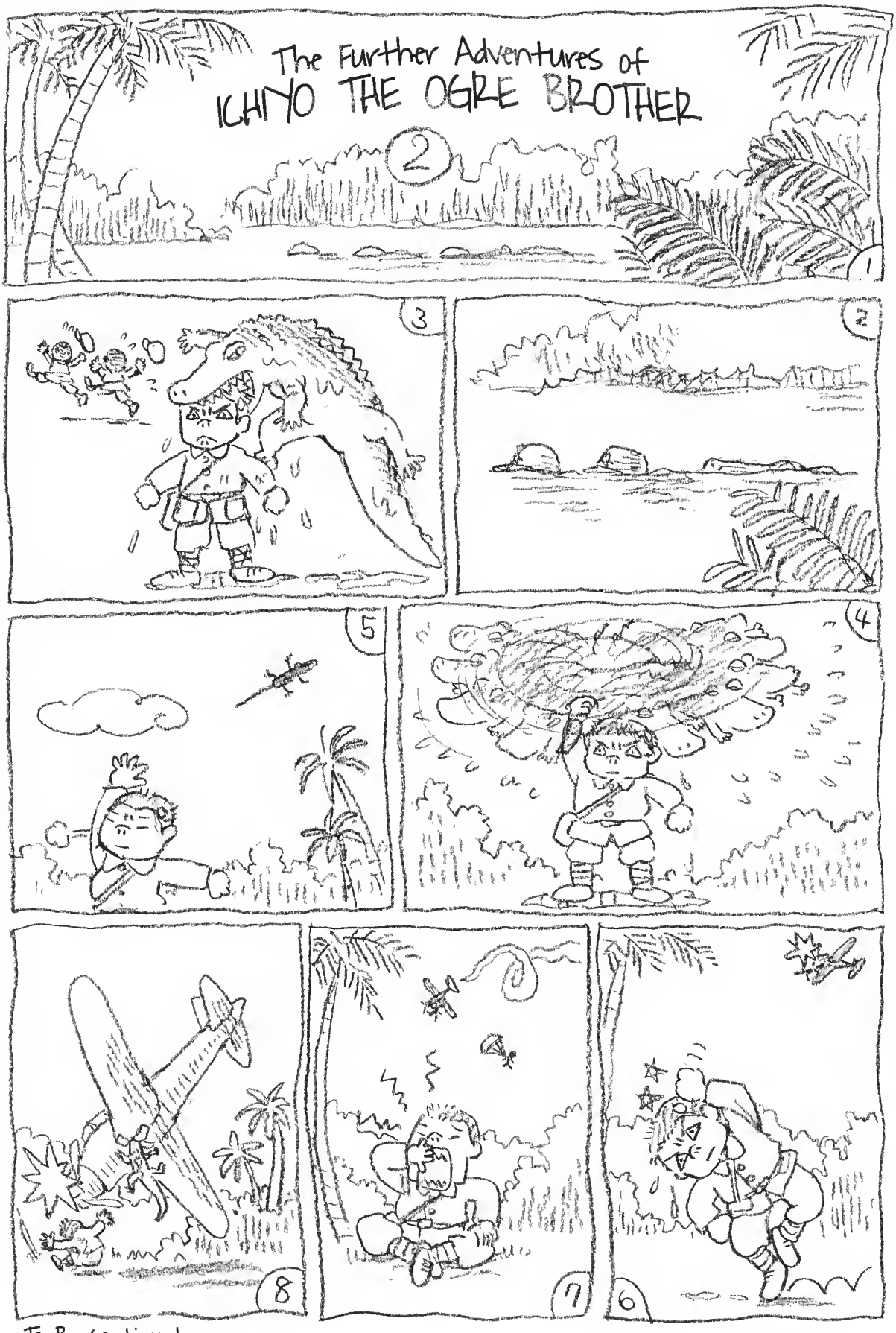

BOTH PA AND I WENT LOOKING FOR HER, DAY AFTER DAY. WE NEVER FOUND HER.
PA COL-LAPSED BACK IN OCTOBER AND DIED NOT MUCH LATER.
.....
WE HAD A SERVICE FOR BOTH OF 'EM AT THE SCHOOL.
IT WAS A HECTIC TIME. I'M SORRY I COULDN'T GET WORD TO YOU.
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO DO ALL THAT WORK YOURSELF, SUMI-CHAN.
I'M SORRY I COULDN'T GET HERE SOONER.
NAH. IT'S BETTER YOU WEREN'T HERE.
SUZU-CHAN, LOOK.
I'VE GOT THESE BRUISES ALL OVER, NOW.
DO YOU THINK THEY'LL HEAL?
DO YOU THINK I'LL GET BETTER SOMEDAY?
YOU WILL.
IT JUST WOULDN'T BE RIGHT IF YOU DIDN'T.


1
The Further Adventures of
ICHIYO
THE OGRE BROTHER
1
2
TROMP
TROMP
TROMP
3
— TOOT TOOT
4
SPLASH!
5
FOOSH
6
GOBBLE
CHOMP
7
CHOMP
GOBBLE
GOBBLE
8
BLUB
BLUB
GOBBLE
To Be Continued...

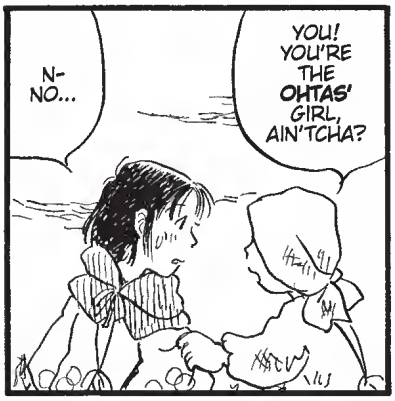

ERM!
?
WE'RE GOIN' UP THE RIVER. WANT A RIDE?
OKAY ...
.....
.....
.....
LEAVING AL-READY? I THOUGHT IT WASN'T 'TIL DUSK.
YEP.
BUT I WANT TO DROP BY THE HOUSE IN EBA FIRST.
AH, SO YOU'RE FROM KURE.
?
BUT YOU GREW UP IN EBA, EH?
I SEE, I SEE.
?


THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
NO PROBLEM. WATCH YOUR STEP AS YOU GET OFF.

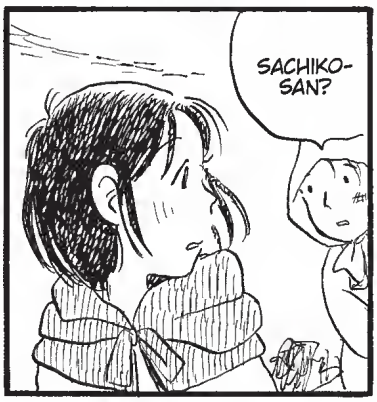

AH!
MA?! IZZAT YOU?!
.....
WE'RE SOR-RY.
SOR-RY.
SOR-RY.
"KISENO YOICHI CONTACT THE MORTAS IN KUSATSU RIGHT AWAY
-JURO & SUMI



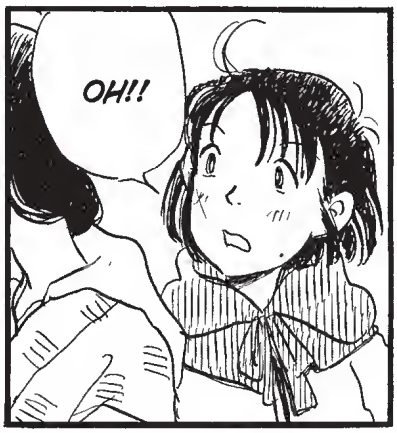
To Be Continued...


N-NO...
YOU! YOU'RE THE OHTAS' GIRL, AIN'TCHA?

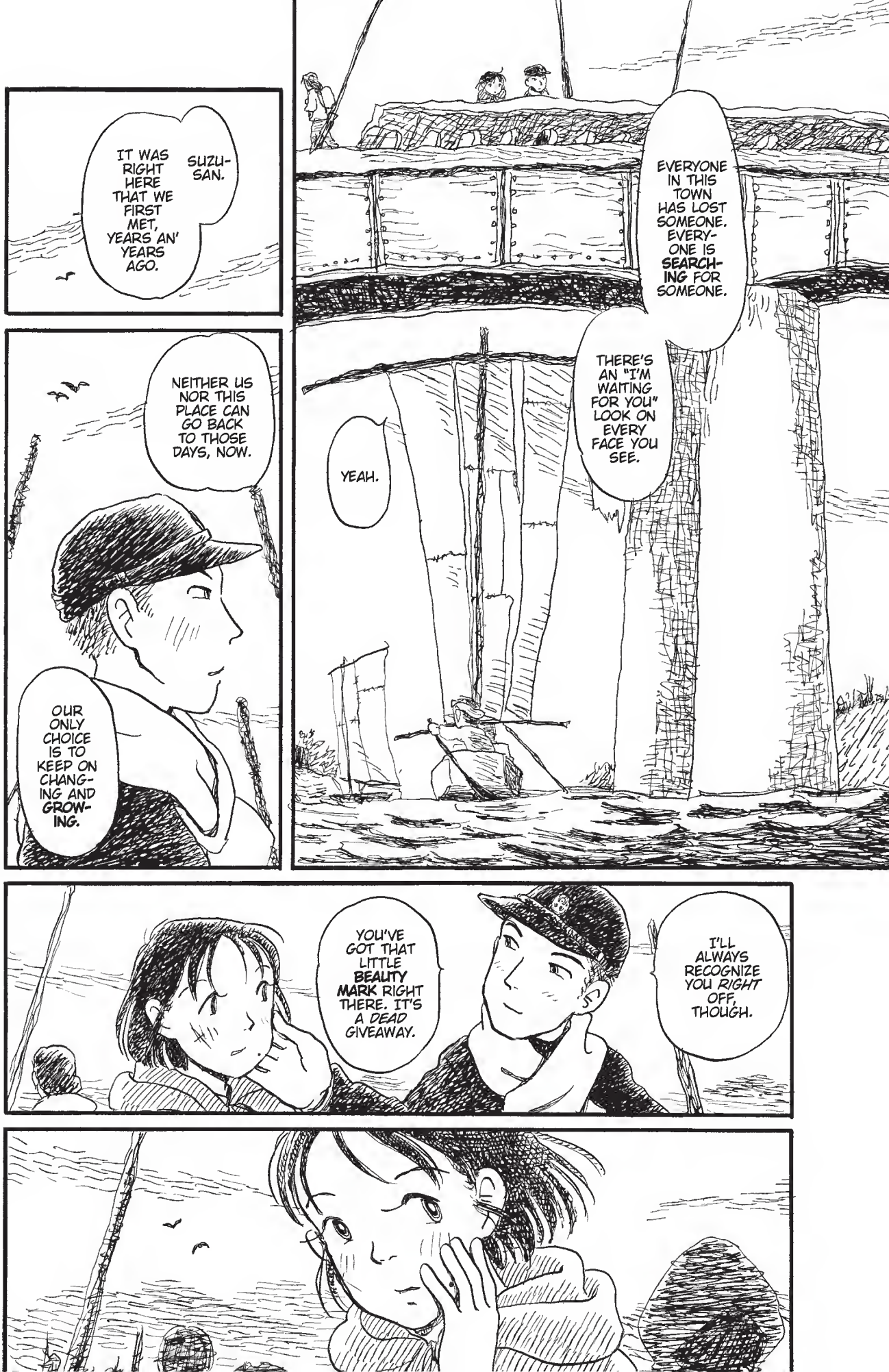
KIYOKO-SAN! KIYOKO-SAN, IT'S YOU!


SACHIKO-SAN?

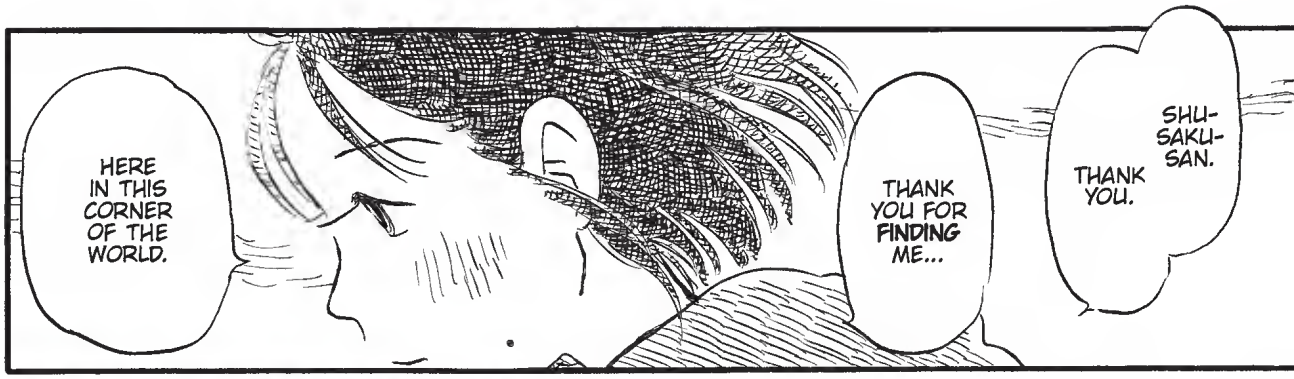
RIN-SAN!!

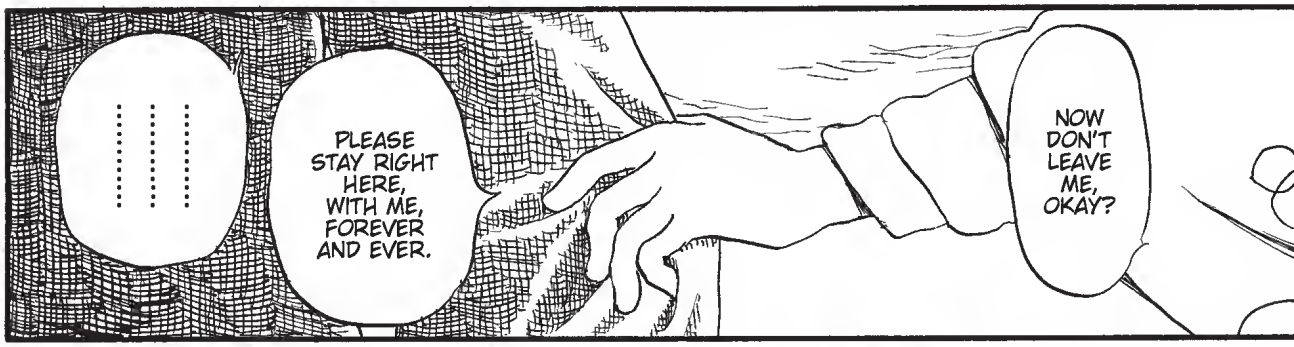

OH!!

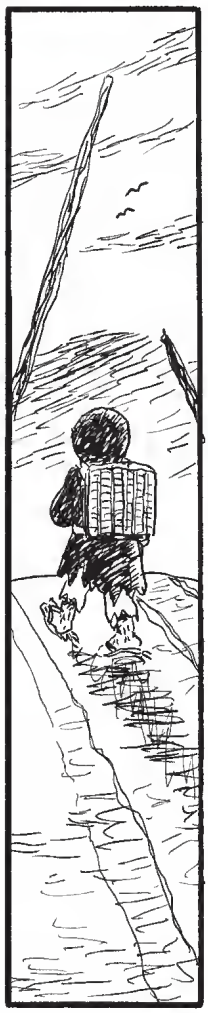
SIGH
SUZU-SAN.
SORRY TO WORRY YOU.
WAIT LONG?
YES, I DID WAIT AN AWFUL LONG TIME.
I'M REALLY... REALLY HAPPY YOU'RE OKAY.
WELP, THE NAVY'S BEEN COMPLETELY DISMANTLED NOW.
BUT MY EX-SUPERIOR OFFICER GAVE ME A RECOMMENDATION THAT SHOULD HELP ME GET A JOB...
AHA!! DARLING!!
I'M SORRY. WRONG PERSON.
ER... IT'S OKAY.

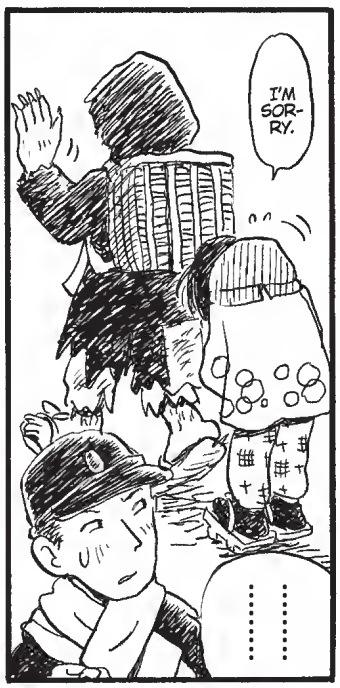

IT WAS RIGHT HERE THAT WE FIRST MET, YEARS AN' YEARS AGO.
SUZU-SAN.
NEITHER US NOR THIS PLACE CAN GO BACK TO THOSE DAYS, NOW.
OUR ONLY CHOICE IS TO KEEP ON CHANG-ING AND GROW-ING.
EVERYONE IN THIS TOWN HAS LOST SOMEONE. EVERY-ONE IS SEARCH-ING FOR SOMEONE.
THERE'S AN "I'M WAITING FOR YOU" LOOK ON EVERY FACE YOU SEE.
YEAH.
YOU'VE GOT THAT LITTLE BEAUTY MARK RIGHT THERE. IT'S A DEAD GIVEAWAY.
I'LL ALWAYS RECOGNIZE YOU RIGHT OFF, THOUGH.

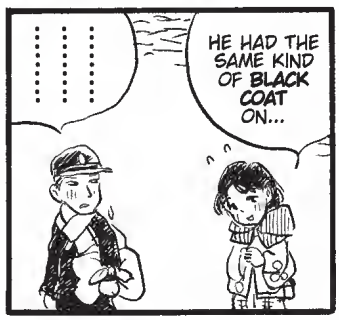
STUK
The Further Adventures of
3 ICHYO
THE OGRE BROTHER
KRUNCH
KRUNCH
BUSTLE
BUSTLE
TING
The End

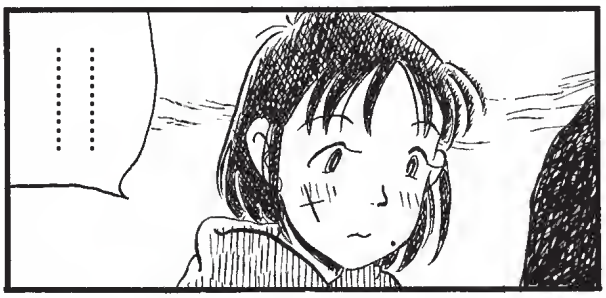

HERE IN THIS CORNER OF THE WORLD.
THANK YOU FOR FINDING ME...
THANK YOU.
SHU-SAKU-SAN.


.....
PLEASE STAY RIGHT HERE, WITH ME, FOREVER AND EVER.
NOW DON'T LEAVE ME, OKAY?




I'M SOR-RY.
.....


.....
HE HAD THE SAME KIND OF BLACK COAT ON...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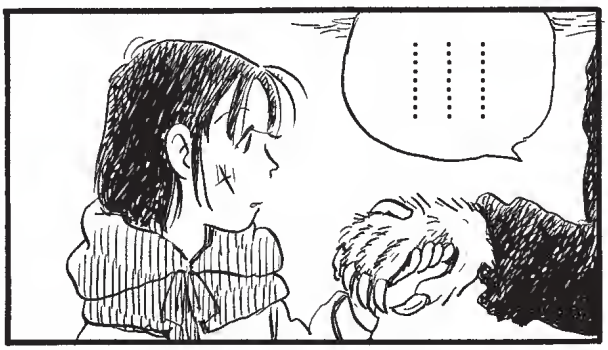
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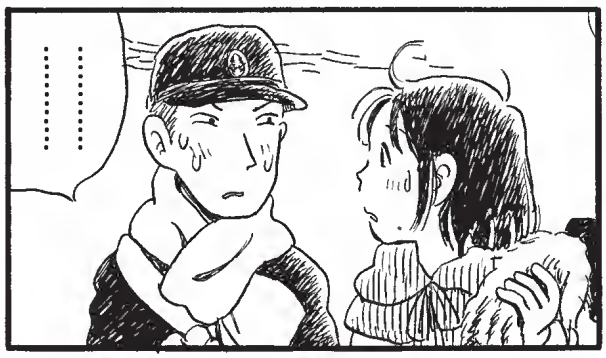
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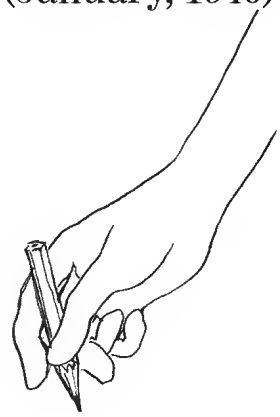
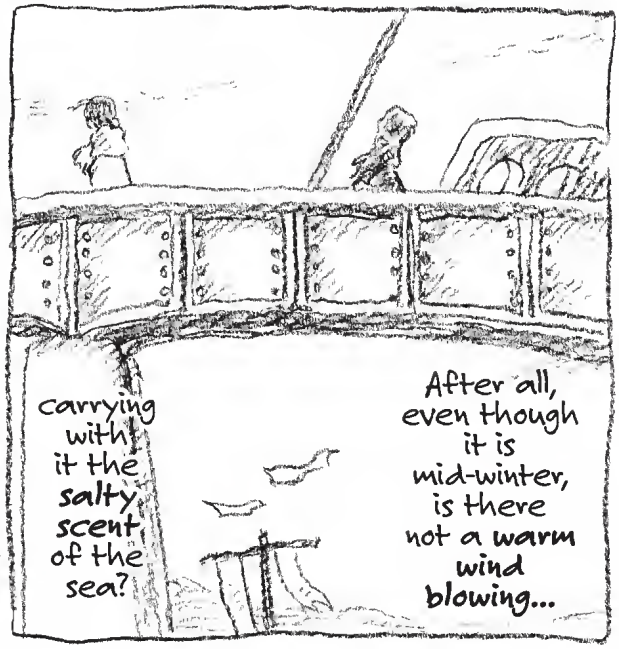
FINAL CHAPTER

A LETTER OF HAPPINESS

(January, 1946)



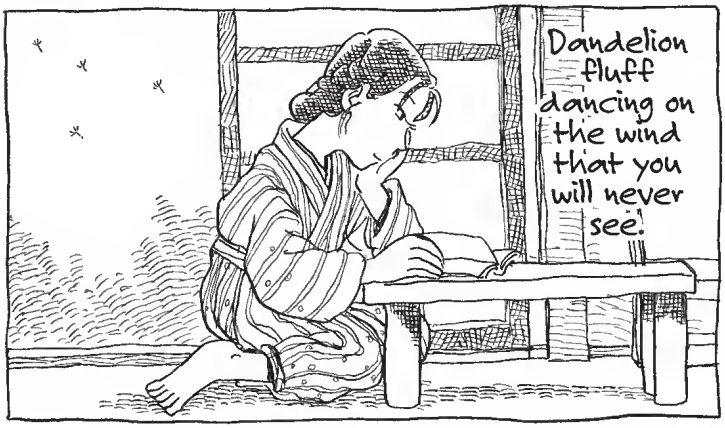
Please pardon the abruptness.

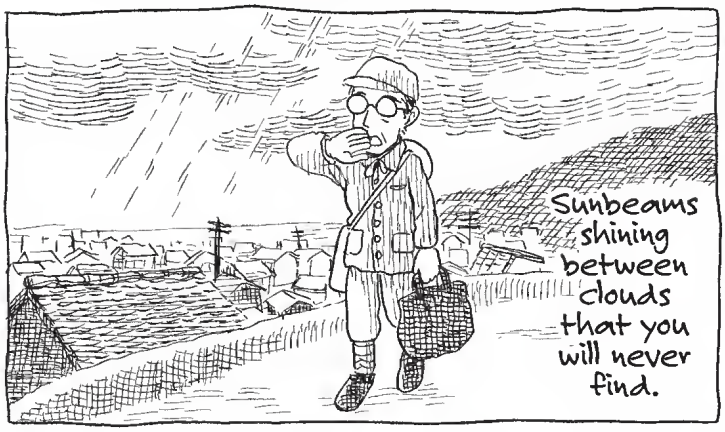


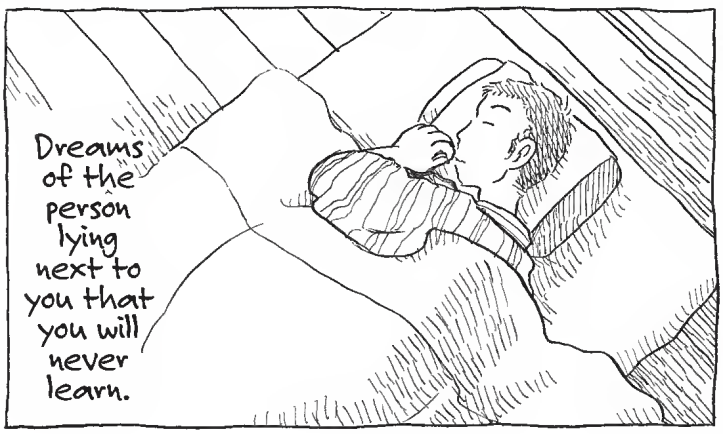
And at night, a seaweed-colored darkness wraps around you.
The soft, warm rays of the sun stroke your back.
Righteousness burns bright, only to scatter like blossoms on the wind...
AUG 6
A love that can be found within everything...

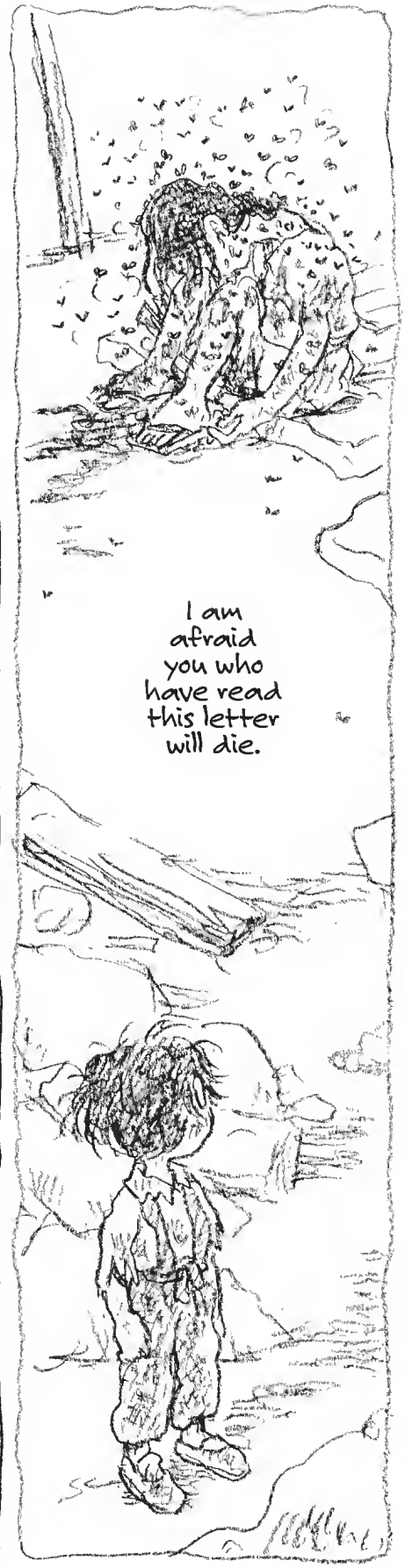
A place to belong that is always open to you.
And last but not least...
I'm sorry.

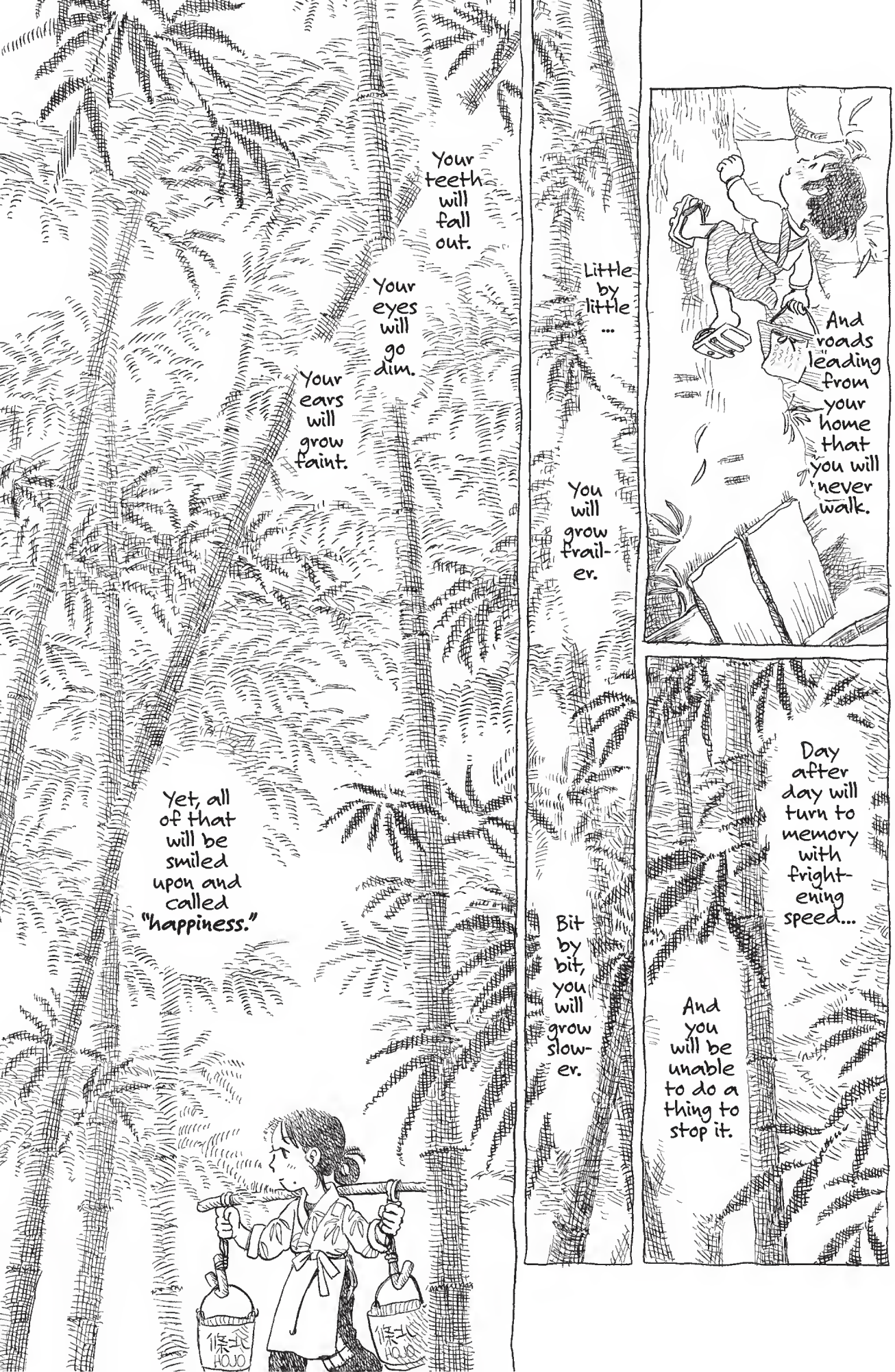
There will be twittering of birds that you will never hear.

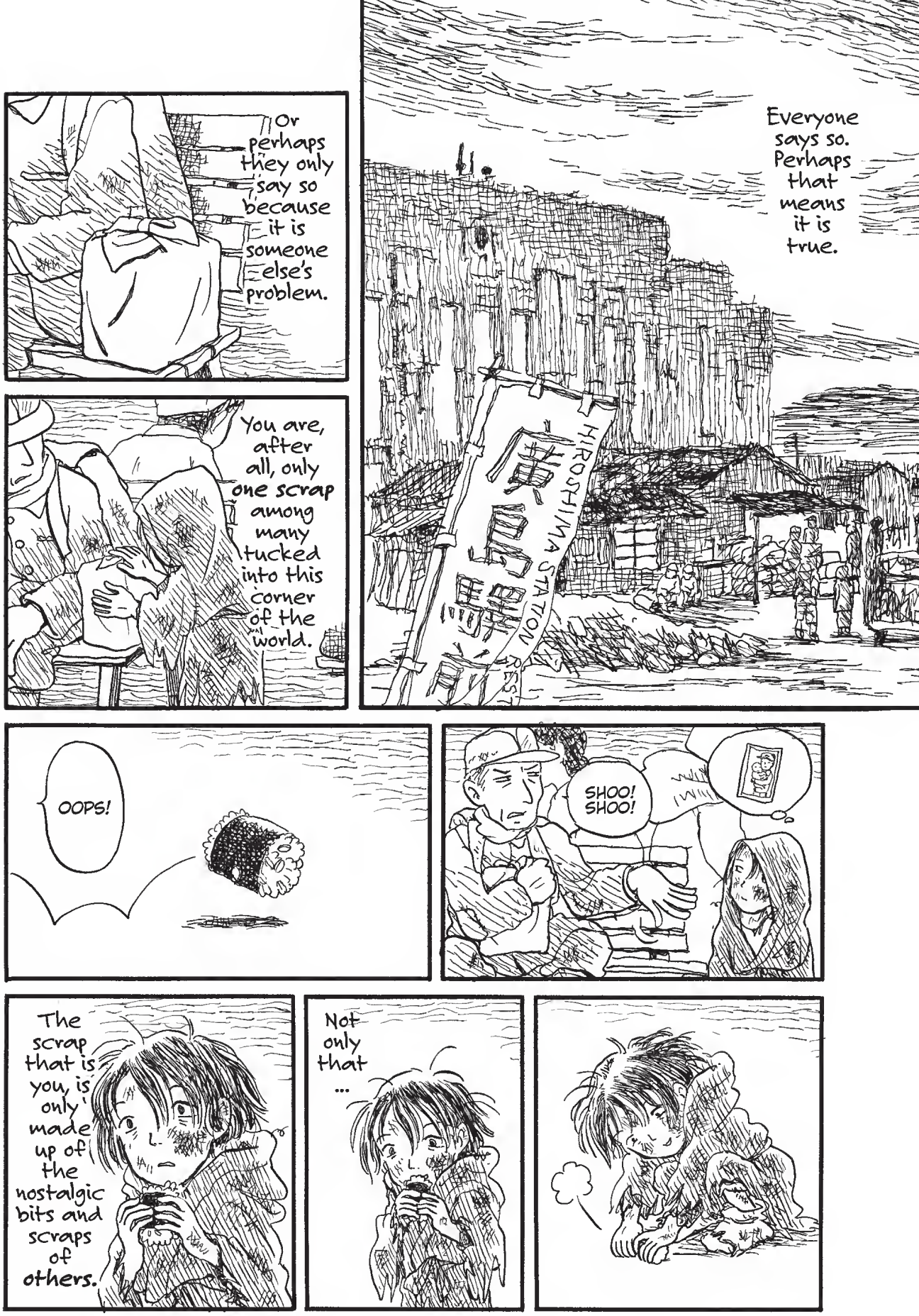

Dandelion fluff dancing on the wind that you will never see.


Sunbeams shining between clouds that you will never find.

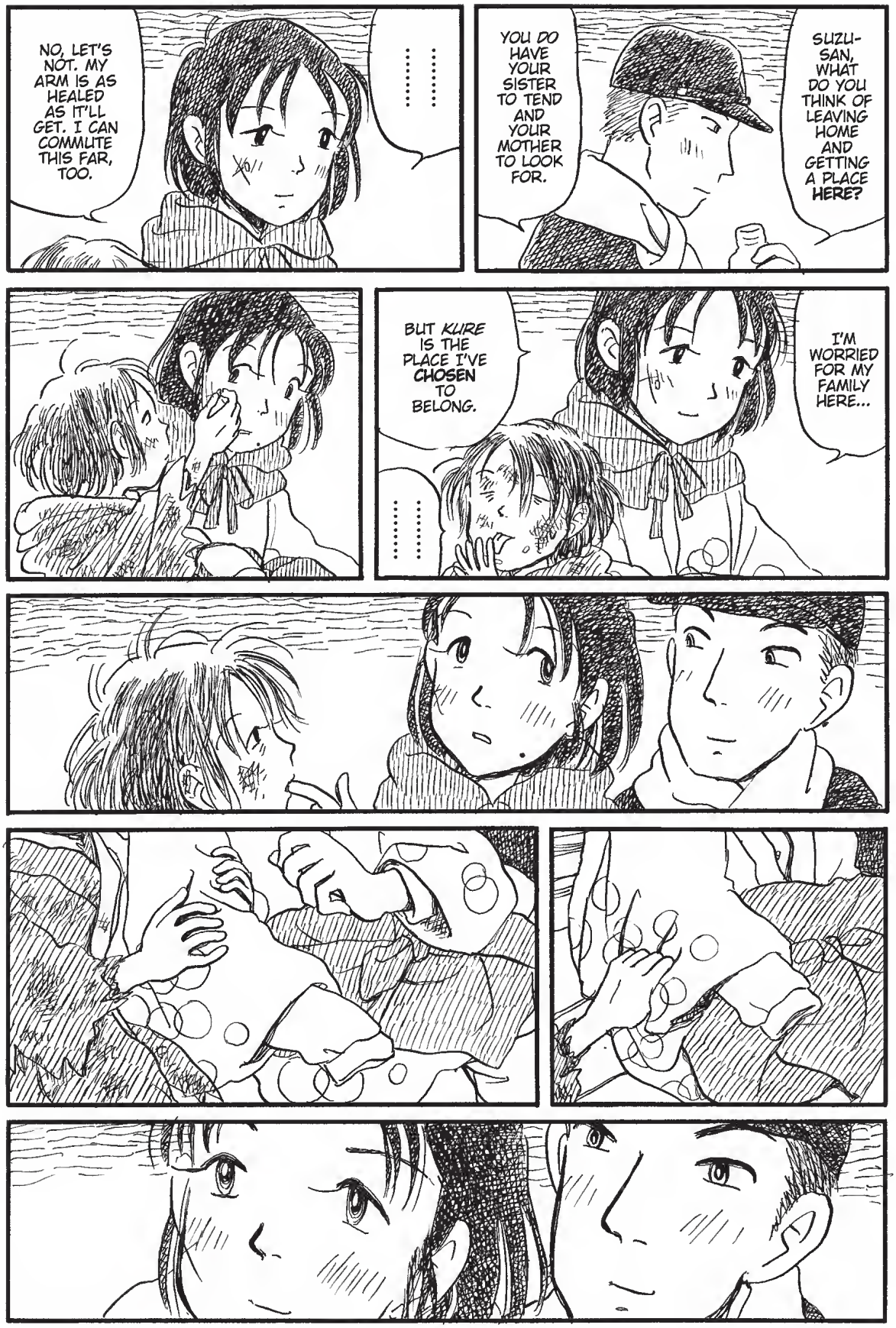

Dreams of the person lying next to you that you will never learn.


I am afraid you who have read this letter will die.


Your teeth will fall out.
Your eyes will go dim.
Your ears will grow faint.
Yet, all of that will be smiled upon and called "happiness."
Little by little ...
You will grow frail-er.
Bit by bit, you will grow slow-er.
And roads leading from your home that you will never walk.
Day after day will turn to memory with fright-ening speed...
And you will be unable to do a thing to stop it.
HOJO
HOJO


Or perhaps they only say so because it is someone else's problem.
You are, after all, only one scrap among many tucked into this corner of the world.
Everyone says so. Perhaps that means it is true.
HIROSHIMA STATION
OOPS!
SHOO! SHOO!
The scrap that is you is only made up of the nostalgic bits and scraps of others.
Not only that ...

.....
.....
.....
OH. WHY THANK YOU.
BUT THAT'S OKAY. YOU SHOULD EAT IT.
ANY-WAYS, I'M JUST GLAD I MANAGED TO GET A JOB HERE IN HIRO-SHIMA.
STILL, IT'S AN AWFUL LONG WAY TO COM-MUTE.
.....


NO, LET'S NOT. MY ARM IS AS HEALED AS IT'LL GET. I CAN COMMUTE THIS FAR, TOO.
.....
YOU DO HAVE YOUR SISTER TO TEND AND YOUR MOTHER TO LOOK FOR.
SUZU-SAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF LEAVING HOME AND GETTING A PLACE HERE?
I'M WORRIED FOR MY FAMILY HERE...
BUT KURE IS THE PLACE I'VE CHOSEN TO BELONG.
.....

Due to storm and war damage, requisitions by the occupying army, and fuel shortages making vehicles scarce, the train was the only mode of transport for most. It was very crowded at the time.

A love that can be found within every-thing.

YOU DID REALLY GOOD TO SURVIVE HERE IN HIRO-SHIMA. THANK YOU.

YOU.

And, as this world turns and changes ...

KURE.

NEXT STOP, KURE.

"KURE"?

YEP. THIS IS KURE.

the bits and scraps of my love that find their homes all around me.

Slope-roofed barracks were a type of emergency housing proposed by the Navy. Easily buildable even by people with little construction knowledge, several thousand of them were built and allotted to those in need.

There. See?

One piece has just found its place in you.

Just like that.

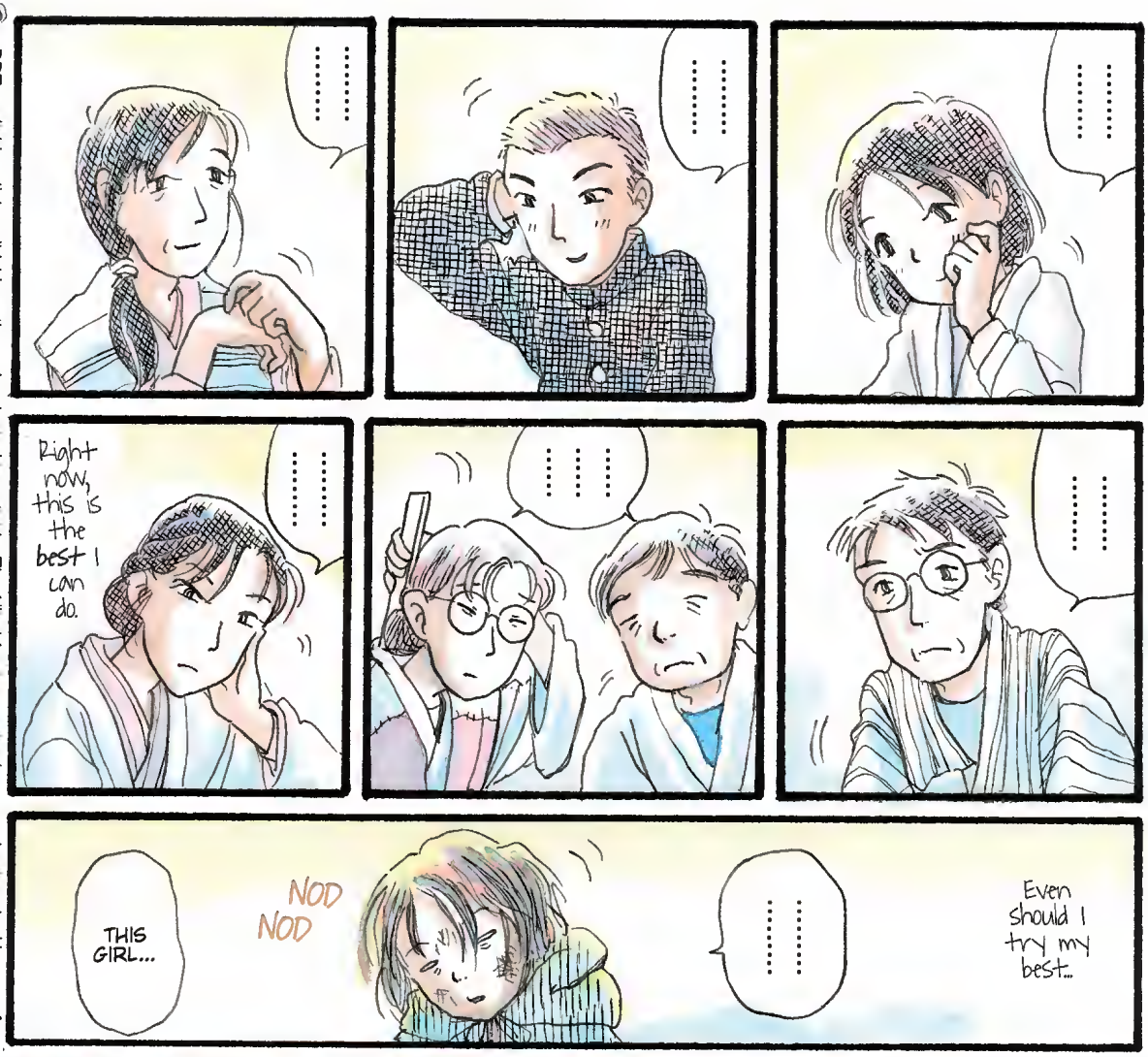
.....?

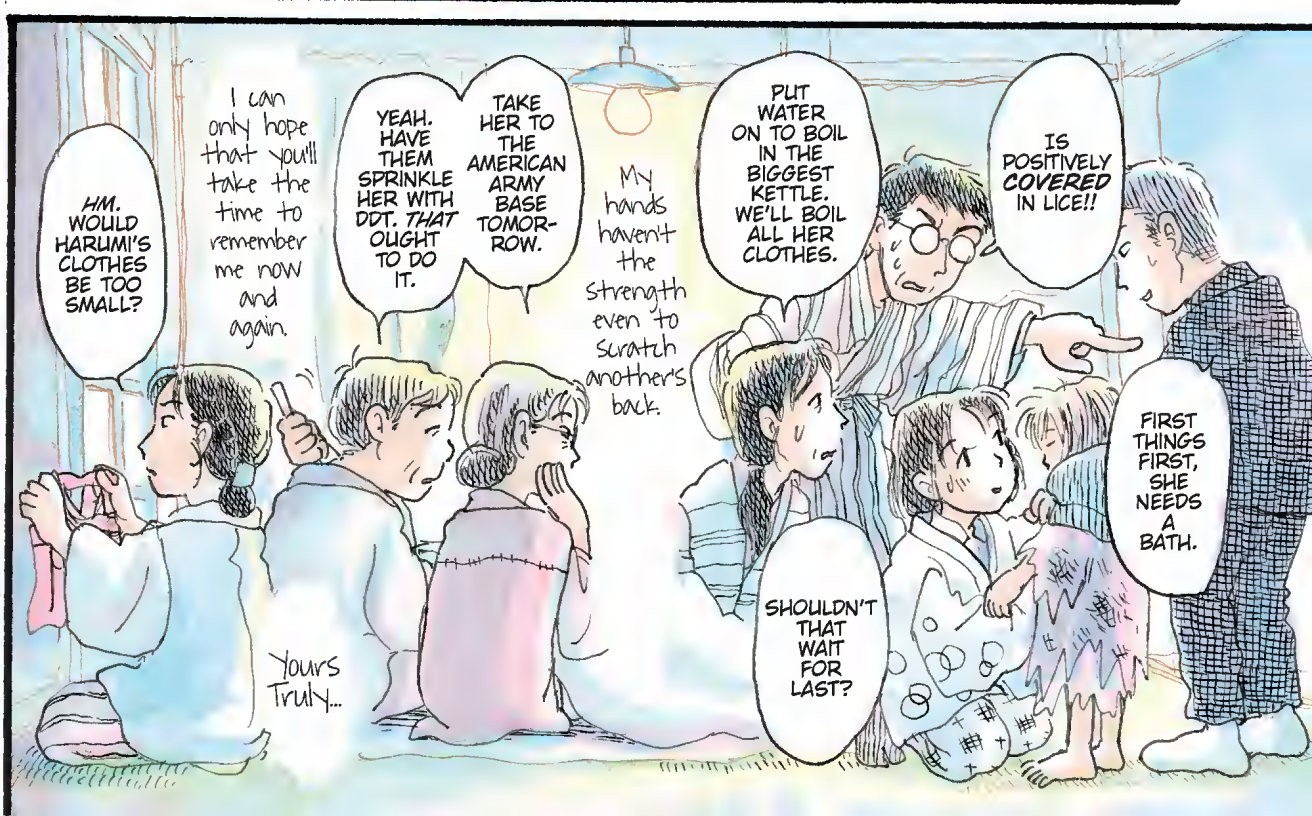
AH, THOSE THERE ARE BAR-RACKS.

YOU DON'T SEE 'EM BUILT LIKE THAT AROUND HIRO-SHIMA, DO YOU?

Hm? Ah, did she fall asleep?
Our house is on its slope.
There in the middle is Mt. Haigamine.
Beyond that one is Hiroshima.
And to the left is Mt. Hachimaki.
To the far right is Mt. Yasumi.
Behind us is the sea.
Look.
Nine mountains protect Kure. That's how it got the name "Kyūrei," meaning nine peaks.

DDT, or dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, is a topical insecticide. The Allied Armies, seeing how poor hygiene had become for some war victims, would sprinkle it directly on people if asked. However, now that its side effects are known, its use is banned in Japan.





In this Corner of the World

[END]

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Additional Notes

During the serialization of this series, it came to my attention that the first air raid warning in Kure was actually sounded in June of 1944, not July (see note on page 138 of Volume 1).

Also, though Shimonaganoki People's School was fabricated for the sake of the story, it was modeled after the real-life Tatsukawa People's School (which would later become Tatsukawa Elementary School).

The Generous People Who Assisted Me

• Mr. Yoshiaki Saito, from the Irifuneyama Memorial Museum, who kindly and patiently answered my odd and ignorant questions.

• Mr. Kazuhiko Nakagawa, my grandmother's cousin, who told me what it was like to be a clerk for the Imperial Japanese Navy's Courts Martial.

• Mrs. Junko Okazaki, my aunt, who spoke to me of her memories of living in Kure.

• Dr. Tatsuo Kubota and Toshihisa Kido, who directed me to many useful references.

• Mrs. Nagomi Aoyama, who guided me up a snowy Mt. Haigamine.

• Mr. Kiyokazu Watanabe and Mrs. Rei Tensei for teaching me a Kyushu accent.

• Futabasha's Makoto Someya, who was patient with me even when I missed my deadlines. (I'm so sorry!!)

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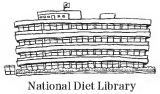
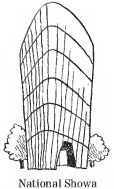
THE VERY HELPFUL LOCATIONS I VISITED

The Shitamachi Museum



National Diet Library



National Showa Memorial Museum

Hiroshima City Central Library

Japan Spinning Top Museum

Navy Cemetery

Funairiyama Museum

Kure Maritime Museum

Hiroshima City Museum of History and Traditional Crafts

Historical Materials Hall for the Wounded and Sick Retired Soldiers

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AFTERWORD

A pollen-filled morning, February, 2009

I have not experienced dying yet, so I can't say if it is the greatest unhappiness that can befall a person. I have also never been anyone but myself, so it is hard to strictly say I fully understand the nobility and magnificence of all life. Perhaps because of that, sometimes I feel like I have a difficult time understanding "war pieces" that insist on measuring the weight of tragedy through the "death" of "everyone." Usually, the first thing I will then try to do is learn about the "individuals" who must have been there, and the joys and sadness in each of their lives.

Both now and back then, Kure has been a marvel of a city, with both a bravery and grace to it. On a more personal level, it is my mother's home town. What did the people connected to me wish for and what did they lose? Twenty three years passed between the end of the war and the time I came into their lives and, as many of them have since passed away, there is no way for me to know for certain now. Thus this work is, in the end, little more than my interpretation. I simply took the "memories" of the cheerful and quiet "lives" they must have led as a cornerstone, and began to draw.

To be honest, I didn't think I would ever finish it.

All the guiding souls I have met. The little place for a story about the years 1943 to 1946 in a manga anthology published in 2006 to 2009. The everyday peace of being able to draw with my dominant hand. And that you are here, reading this sentence right now.

I believe all of these are miracles.

Thank you.

この世界の片隅に

Fumiyo Kouno

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story and art by **FUMIYO KOUNO**

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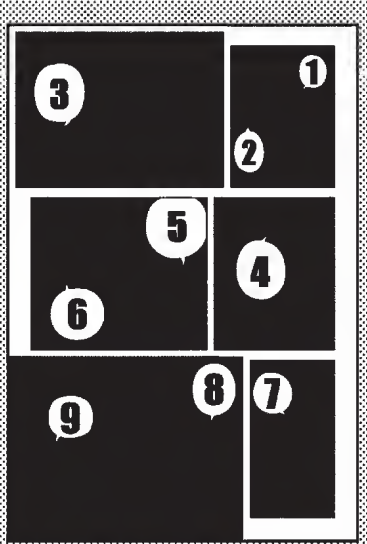
This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



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[Volume 3 of 3]

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